

Continuity and Change  
in Sixth-Century Byzantium

17 5 2003





Professor Averil Cameron

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## PREFACE

An author who is given the chance to collect her works after so short a time is both privileged and in need of a defence. That defence, in this case, lies in the coherence and unity of this selection which will, I hope, give the book a real practical use. They have been written over sixteen years of academic development and therefore show the expected unevenness of quality. But, though they do not represent all, or even all the best, of what I wrote during that period, they fit remarkably closely together in terms of their subject matter, and ask to be brought together in this way.

The main preoccupation is with the later sixth century, beginning from a study of certain authors, and widening into the general cultural history of the period. I have arranged the essays strictly by subject matter rather than in chronological order of writing, since this is likely to prove the most useful sequence, even if it leads to uncomfortable juxtapositions of the older and the new. There is always an inner logic in the sequence of an author's work, though it is not necessarily the logic perceptible on the surface to a reader. In this volume one can see that logic more clearly than usual, when the newer essays can be seen to be taking up the threads of earlier ones. I am especially glad to have been able to include my inaugural lecture at King's College, *The Sceptic and the Shroud*, which, despite its title, does exactly that.

But if these papers divide more or less into groups, first mainly about the historians Procopius and Agathias, then about the poet Corippus, passing from his subject, the Emperor Justin II and his wife Sophia to the study of the cult of the Virgin in Constantinople (stimulated by Sophia's prayer in Corippus's poem) and to the wider question of the reasons for growing devotion to icons and the general cultural alignment at the end of the sixth century, they also show a personal development and a widening of horizons. One's origins and early training always remain with one, and it will not seem surprising that I came to late antiquity from the classics, nor that the earlier papers are preoccupied with the classical background of sixth-century literature. But in later ones I argue that

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the end of the sixth century also saw the end, for generations, of most of that classical background. I came to see the importance of sixth-century art, as of literature, that was in no way 'classical'. Nor can the literature of the late sixth century be understood except in close connection with general history or with the results of recent archeological work. But latter, in relation to the sixth and seventh centuries, had barely begun when the earlier of these papers were written, and its influence shows only in the latest of them, but I have been more closely involved in recent years through an invitation by the University of Michigan to be present at the Carthage excavations and this will in due course bear fruit in the shape of studies of the North African material in two of the authors represented here, Procopius and Corippus.

A history of sixth-century literature in the eastern empire remains to be written, as indeed do the definitive works on Justinian, his successors, or Heraclius. Not only these major works, but also many of the basic tools of research are lacking for this period, and few of the authors discussed have received full-length studies. This makes the task hard, but it also makes it rewarding, and these essays will be of use even if they simply mark out the ground plan: that is my defence for including some early ones which otherwise I might have preferred to leave out.

I am grateful to Variorum Reprints for providing this opportunity and to all the original publishers for generously agreeing to allow the papers to be reproduced: the editors of *Historia* (I), *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* (II), the *Harvard Theological Review* (IV), *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* (IX), *Byzantion* (XI, XII, XIII, XVII), and the *Journal of Theological Studies* (XV, XVI); Oxford University Press (III, VIII); King's College, London (V); the Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa (VI); the Institute of Classical Studies, London (VII); the Ecclesiastical History Society (X); the University of Chicago Press (XVI); and the Past and Present Society (XVIII).

AVERIL CAMERON

King's College, London  
March, 1981

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## THE "SCEPTICISM" OF PROCOPIUS

Already by Gibbon's day the task of distinguishing Procopius' religious views could be called an "honourable problem";<sup>1</sup> since then several other scholars have tackled it, most recently B. Rubin in his monumental article on Procopius in Pauly-Wissowa.<sup>2</sup> Without exception, Procopius has emerged as a sceptic, a cool observer of Christianity, sometimes a crypto-pagan, sometimes a nominal but detached Christian, but always rational and a free-thinker. Even Downey, at the end of an article emphasising the signs of orthodox Christianity in Procopius, and explicitly likening his attitude to history to that of St. Augustine, concludes that he was probably a Christian "of an independent and skeptical sort" – a conclusion that owes more to the writer's own preconceptions than to the trend of his argument.<sup>3</sup> Among earlier scholars, Dahn called Procopius' religious views "absoluter Skeptizismus"<sup>4</sup> and Teuffel says that "als Skeptiker verhält er sich erstens zur positiven Religion indifferent."<sup>5</sup> More recently Veh, again refusing to accept in full the drift of his own argument, claims that Procopius' critical intellect prevented him from wholeheartedly embracing Christianity,<sup>6</sup> and Rubin goes further than this in arguing that although Procopius was a nominal Christian, he was really a free-thinker whose direct heirs are modern agnostics like Spencer and Huxley,<sup>7</sup> and even that he held to the sort of scepticism preached by Sextus Empiricus, amounting, Rubin suggests, to a dualistic view of the world and of God.<sup>8</sup> It is this rooted assumption of Procopius' scepticism that I wish to examine. Is it justified by the texts?

<sup>1</sup> Bury's ed. IV<sup>2</sup> 211 n. 12 "Their (i.e. Procopius' and Agathias') religion, an honourable problem, betrays occasional conformity, with a secret attachment to Paganism and Philosophy."

<sup>2</sup> RE 23. 1 col. 273f. The article is also printed separately as *Prokopios von Kaisarea*, Stuttgart (1954). All references are to the P-W version.

<sup>3</sup> G. Downey, "Paganism and Christianity in Procopius," *Church History* 18 (1949) 89f.

<sup>4</sup> F. Dahn, *Prokopios von Cäsarea*, Berlin (1865) 159 etc.

<sup>5</sup> W. Teuffel, "Procopius," *Studien u. Charakteristiken z. griech.- u. röm. sowie z. deutschen Literaturgeschichte* 1, Leipzig (1871) 222 (still fundamental).

<sup>6</sup> O. Veh, *Zur Geschichtsschreibung u. Weltauffassung des Prokop von Caesarea*, II. Teil, Wiss. Beilage z. Jahresbericht 1951/2 des Gymnasiums Christian-Ernestinum Bayreuth (1952) 28.

<sup>7</sup> RE 23. 1. 332. Cf. also W. G. Holmes, *The Age of Justinian and Theodora*<sup>2</sup>, London (1912) II. 745 "In religion he was a freethinker, believing in a Providence which, however had not become concrete in the form of any personal being in his mind."

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.* 335.

First, a word or two on the general principles to be followed in the discussion. Procopius was writing in an age when it was perhaps impossible for a layman to distinguish fully between the pagan and the Christian strands in his thought. He was not himself, moreover, even attempting to do so, and such religious views as he expresses are only incidental to his main purpose, which was (in the *Wars*) that of recording events. Consistency is not to be expected from such a writer, and it is wrong to concentrate on some passages to the exclusion of others. Yet this is just what has so often been done. Accordingly it will be necessary, even at risk of labouring the obvious, to distinguish the passages which seem to prove Procopius' Christianity as against the conventional view of him as a sceptic. On the way I hope to demonstrate that many of the passages and characteristics which have commonly been taken to show scepticism have not only been taken out of context, but actually misinterpreted.

It is easy to see why the "scepticism" view has gained such wide acceptance. We have three works by Procopius, of very widely diverging kinds. The *Wars*, in which he has left us a record of Justinian's wars in Persia, in Africa and in Italy, was accompanied by the *Secret History*, an astonishing outburst of vituperation against Justinian, only to be followed by the *Buildings*, nothing short of a panegyric on the same Emperor.<sup>9</sup> While the latter work seems wholly Christian in tone, as suits an admiring record of Justinian's building activity, with particular emphasis on the churches which he founded, the *Wars* gives an impression of coolness and detachment, achieved by an assiduous avoidance of specific Christianisms or subject matter concerning the Church, together with an emphasis on τὴν ἀλήθειαν and an apparently objective, if not ignorant, approach to Christian terms. To complicate the issue still further, the *Wars* is not wholly consistent; in a minority of cases Procopius seems to show himself conventionally Christian. Not surprisingly, it has been thought impossible to discern any clear ideas among the welter of Procopius' thought,<sup>10</sup> and Stein fell back on the impression that he had a limitless scepticism which allowed him to admit anything as possible, so that he could incline sometimes towards "un fatalisme rationaliste," sometimes to "un théisme vaguement chrétien," sometimes to "une crédulité superstitieuse."<sup>11</sup> On this view, surely the refuge of despair, Procopius had no fixed attitude at all. Is it justified, and if not, what is his real position?

Let us consider first the passages where Procopius is held to display his detachment from Christianity. Only two are adduced in support of his scepti-

<sup>9</sup> For the relative dating (*Wars* 551–3, *Secret History* 550, *Buildings* 554), cf. E. Stein, *Histoire du Bas-Empire* II (1949) 717f. and E. G. S. V.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. J. Haury, *Zur Beurteilung des Geschichtsschreibers Prokopios von Cäsarea*, Progr. München (1896) 13, G. Soyter, "Prokop als Geschichtsschreiber des Vandalen- u. Gotenkrieges," *Neue Jahrb. f. Antike u. deutsche Bildung* II (1939) 106.

<sup>11</sup> *Op. cit.*, II. 716.



cism in the face of ordinary Christian belief. The first is at *BP* II. 10. 4, where the subject is the fall of Antioch to Chosroes, king of Persia, in AD 540. "I am giddy at recording such a disaster," writes Procopius, "and at handing it on to posterity, and I cannot tell what God's purpose could be in raising up high the affairs of a man or a place and then casting them down and blotting them out for no reason apparent to us. For it is wrong to say that He has not a reason for everything."<sup>12</sup> Rubin holds that this passage amounts to a statement of pessimistic resignation and to the belief that since all is change, man cannot know anything.<sup>13</sup> This is surely reading far too much into it. It is no more than a natural expression of bewilderment before God's apparent injustice, which is, as Rubin himself admits, "ein beliebtes Thema jeder Laien-theologie."<sup>14</sup> Not only this; a consideration of the context of Procopius' remarks will reveal them as pious rather than sceptical. At the beginning of the chapter he records without any sign of disbelief that God sent a sign of the forthcoming disaster to the Antiochenes, but that they did not recognise it. The standards of the troops stationed there turned of their own accord to face East instead of West, symbolising that power over the city would pass from the Byzantine Emperor to the King of Persia; but no-one, says Procopius, interpreted the event correctly (*BP* II. 10. 1-4). And although Procopius expresses his bewilderment, as anyone might,<sup>15</sup> at the seeming injustice and irrationality of it all, he is convinced that there is a divine plan (*ἀπαντα κατὰ λόγον αἰεὶ γίνεσθαι* - *BP* II. 10. 5). In the very next chapter he records in a similarly matter-of-fact way how Apamea was spared Chosroes' attack by a relic of the True Cross (*BP* II. 11. 14f.<sup>16</sup>). "God saved Apamea," he says bluntly (*BP* II. 11. 28 ὁ θεὸς Ἀπάμειαν διεσώσατο). A later passage in the same book also weighs against any impression of scepticism still left by *BP* II 10. 4. At *BP* II. 22f., Procopius describes the great plague of 542. As to the attempts of scientists to understand the causes of the plague, Procopius thinks them vain and useless; we can only look to God for an explanation (*ἐς τὸν θεὸν ἀνατρέψασθαι* - *BP* II. 22. 2). It is interesting to see that this is exactly the same attitude as the one which Procopius' continuator, Agathias, adopts

<sup>12</sup> *ἐγὼ δὲ διὰ τὸ πάθος τοσούτου γράφων τε καὶ παραπέμπων ἐς μνήμην τῷ μέλλοντι χρόνῳ, καὶ οὐκ ἔχω εἰδέναι τί ποτε ἄρα βουλομένη τῷ θεῷ εἴη πράγματα μὲν ἀνδρὸς ἢ χωρίου τοῦ ἐπαίρειν εἰς ὄψος, αὐτοῖς δὲ ρίπτειν τε αὐτὰ καὶ ἀφανίζειν ἐξ οὐδεμιᾶς ἡμῶν φαινομένης αἰτίας. αὐτῷ γὰρ οὐ θέμις εἰπεῖν μὴ οὐχὶ ἀπαντα κατὰ λόγον αἰεὶ γίνεσθαι.*

<sup>13</sup> *RE* 23. 1. 335. I shall henceforth refer to this article simply as 'Rubin'.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>15</sup> Cf. Soph., *OT* 977f., Eur., *Hec.* 488f., to take exx. at random. The beginning of Claudian's *In Rufinum*, a brilliant pastiche, well illustrates the predictability of such a response. "An mundus providentia regatur" was of course a standard theme - Quint., *Inst.* 3. 5. 6, 5. 7. 35, 7. 2. 2, 12. 2. 21.

<sup>16</sup> For the odd way in which Procopius refers to the Crucifixion in this passage cf. *CQ* N. S. 14 (1964) 318.

towards the causes of earthquakes,<sup>17</sup> and which in Agathias has been described as anti-intellectual Byzantine piety.<sup>18</sup>

The other key passage is at *BG* I. 3. 6, where Procopius says that he considers it insane folly (*ἀπόνοια μανιώδης*) to inquire into the nature of God, since man cannot understand such matters. All that he is prepared to say about God is that He is good and that all is in His power.<sup>19</sup> Critics have often regarded this as evidence of Procopius' detachment from Christianity.<sup>20</sup> Why, asks Teuffel, if Procopius was a Christian, was he not prepared at least to testify to the divinity of Christ? In answering this question we shall come to the root of the whole problem, and the answer will occupy most of the rest of my argument.

Was Teuffel justified in expecting Procopius to insert a personal *credo* at this point? Supposing that he was a Christian,<sup>21</sup> he was under no obligation to state it at every turn; a Christian writing in 6c. Christian Constantinople could afford to take his Christianity for granted. But there are signs also that a deliberate purpose lies behind Procopius' seemingly neutral tone. Apart from three brief references, made only in passing,<sup>22</sup> there is in fact only one place in the *Wars* where he speaks of Christ at all - the story of Abgar, toparch of Edessa in the reign of Augustus (*BP* II. 12. 8f.), who, according to tradition,<sup>23</sup> wrote to Jesus asking him to come to live in Edessa. If this passage can be seen to show Procopius' Christianity, Teuffel's *argumentum e silentio* will not be applicable at *BG* I. 3. 8 or elsewhere in the *Wars*. In my opinion the story proves beyond doubt that Procopius was a Christian.<sup>24</sup> He inserts into his version of the Abgar story a lengthy statement, without qualification of any sort, about Jesus' healing and preaching in Palestine, and says simply that Jesus, the son of God (*ὁ τοῦ θεοῦ παῖς*) was then on earth (*ἐν σώματι ὢν*), healing the sick and making the lame walk. He needed only to say that Abgar had *heard* of Christ's ministry; this is all that Eusebius says (whose version of the story probably comes from a source common to him and to Procopius<sup>25</sup>). Instead, Procopius is very positive, adding not only that Christ was without sin (*μηδὲν τὸ παράπαν ἁμαρτεῖν* II. 12. 22) but also that by his miracles he showed that he was truly the son of God (*ἐνδεικνύμενος ὅτι δὴ τοῦ θεοῦ παῖς*

<sup>17</sup> Indeed, Agathias may actually have had Procopius in mind, for there are several verbal similarities between the two accounts (*Ag., Hist.* II. 15, p. 97, 9f. Bonn). The passage in Agathias is important, and I hope to discuss it fully in a forthcoming study.

<sup>18</sup> N. H. Baynes, *The Thought-World of East Rome*, Oxford (1947) 20f.

<sup>19</sup> *ἐγὼ γὰρ οὐκ ἂν οὐδὲν ἄλλο περὶ θεοῦ ὀτιοῦν εἴποιμι ἢ ὅτι ἀγαθὸς τε παντάπασιν εἴη καὶ ἑξομπαντα ἐν τῇ ἐξουσίᾳ τῇ αὐτοῦ ἔχει.*

<sup>20</sup> See Teuffel, *op. cit.*, 221. Cf. J. Irmscher, "Palladas," *Wiss. Zeitschr. der Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin* VI (1956/7) 169 n. 109.

<sup>21</sup> *BP* II. 11. 14 (see n. 16 above), *BG* I. 10. 4 and *BV* I. 6. 26 (cf. *Ag., Hist.* II. 15. 21.).

<sup>22</sup> On the origins of this story see Rubin, 314f., with full bibliography.

<sup>23</sup> Cf. Bury, *Later Roman Empire* I (1889) 178.

<sup>24</sup> *HE* I. 13. 2f., cf. Rubin, *loc. cit.*



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 ὡς ἀλλ' ἔθωκεν εἶπε - *ibid.*). There is no sign that Procopius dissociated himself in any way from what he says. But his remarks at the end of the Abgar story are an even clearer indication that he fully accepted the general outline of the story, including what he says about Jesus. Referring to the local tradition - which Procopius himself doubts - that Christ in his reply to Abgar told him that the city of Edessa would never be taken by barbarians (*BP* II. 12. 26), he says (*BP* II. 12. 30) "it occurred to me that even if Christ did not write what I have mentioned, and men have simply imagined it, nevertheless he wanted by this means to keep the city uncaptured, so as not to give them any pretext for wavering from their faith (πλάγη)." Surely we can take this story at face value; Procopius may doubt details of it, but he is in no doubt at all concerning its essential truth.<sup>24</sup>

It is highly significant, however, that it is the only passage of its kind in the *Wars*. If it represents Procopius' true beliefs, why do most of the "religious" passages in the *Wars* give such a different impression? It is in fact demonstrable that so far as Christian terminology went, Procopius deliberately avoided it in the *Wars* in accordance with his pursuit of classicism, and his general appearance of detachment is surely an extension of this. The *Wars* is a history in the grand manner, influenced to the core by Herodotus and Thucydides.<sup>25</sup> In such a work a piously Christian tone would have been quite out of place; in Procopius' day political history remained not only secular but even classical, not deviating from the traditional form established by the first Greek historians.<sup>26</sup> There was no Christian history as such except ecclesiastical history.<sup>27</sup> Thus while in the *Buildings*, a work of a very different nature, he could use conventional Christian ideas, in the *Wars* Procopius explains and apologizes for Christianisms unknown to the world of Herodotus and Thucydides just as he does for other modernisms such as, for instance, the names of Byzantine offices. When he has to refer to a presbyter, for example, he will say "the priest, ... whom they call 'presbyter',"<sup>28</sup> or of the Gospels "the Christian books, which they call 'Gospels',"<sup>29</sup> and of Easter he says "the Easter festival, which Christians

celebrate more than any other."<sup>30</sup> That he was not ignorant of *res Christianae* or 'cool' towards them simply because he uses them in this qualified way is clear from the fact that he extends the same kind of affected ignorance towards paganism - "the old faith, which they now call 'paganism'."<sup>31</sup> Moreover, he shows that he was perfectly familiar with Christian terms by using them sometimes *without* affectation.<sup>32</sup> His affected ignorance is a device by which he copes with any kind of modernism - for instance, of silentaries he says "the man who serves the Emperor's peace in the palace (the Romans call the holders of this office 'silentaries'),"<sup>33</sup> and of the holders of the office of dux "a general of the sort that they call 'duces'."<sup>34</sup> Examples of this sort of thing can be multiplied indefinitely,<sup>35</sup> and it might seem superfluous to point out that his affectation towards Christianisms does not imply scepticism, were it not that the opposite is maintained even today.<sup>36</sup> The phenomenon is an objection to any sort of modernism,<sup>37</sup> and it was a regular feature of the sort of history which is represented by the *Wars*.<sup>38</sup> So Procopius is introducing a false note into his presentation of religion in the *Wars*, and it is as well to remember that if part of what he says is selfconscious and liable to mislead, more of it may be similarly disingenuous. This is surely the explanation for the absence, on the whole, from the *Wars* of any reference to God in a specifically Christian sense,

<sup>24</sup> *BP* I. 18. 15: ἐορτὴ . . . ἡ Πασχαλῖα, ἣν δὲ σέβονται Χρ. πασῶν μάλιστα. For more exx. see *CQ* N. S. 14 (1964) 316f., Rubin, 329. Cf. e. g. *BP* II. 26. 2, II. 26. 3, *BV* I. 8. 17, I. 8. 18, *BP* I. 7. 22, *BV* II. 26. 17, *Anecd.* 11. 14.

<sup>25</sup> *BP* I. 25. 10: τῆς παλαιᾶς δόξης, ἣν νῦν Ἑλληνικὴν καλεῖν νενομίκασι. Ἑλληνικὸς meaning at this date, of course, 'pagan' - cf. K. Lechner, *Hellenen u. Barbaren* (1954) 37f. Cf. *Aed.* VI. 4. 12: τὴν Ἑλληνικὴν καλουμένην ἀθεῖαν. Cf. also *BG* I. 25. 19: ὁ δὲ Ἰανὸς οὗτος πρῶτος μὲν ἦν τῶν ἀρχαίων θεῶν, οὓς δὲ Ῥωμαῖοι γλώσσει τῇ σφετέρᾳ Πένατες ἐκάλουν. . . . τὰ τρία Φᾶτα· οὕτω γὰρ Ῥωμαῖοι τὰς Μοῖρας νενομίκασι καλεῖν.

<sup>26</sup> E. g. *BG* III. 16. 1 (ἀρχιερεὺς), 16. 5 (διάκονος), IV. 2. 17-18 (ἐπίσκοποι) etc.

<sup>27</sup> *BP* II. 21. 2: βασιλεῖ μὲν αἰὲν ἐν παλατίῳ τὰ ἐς τὴν ἡσυχίαν ὑπηρετοῦντα (σιλентιαρίους Ῥωμαῖοι καλοῦσιν οἷς ἡ τιμὴ αὕτη ἐπίκειται).

<sup>28</sup> *BP* I. 17. 46: ἄρχων, οὓς δοῦκας καλοῦσιν. In military matters, where modern terminology was most necessary, Procopius is particularly vague, not always even giving the correct name - cf. A. Müller, *Philologus* 72 (1912) 101f., R. Grosse, *Römische Militärgesch. von Gallienus bis zum Beginn der byz. Themenverfassung* (1920) 272f.

<sup>29</sup> E. g. *BV* I. 10. 3, I. 11. 4, II. 2. 1, II. 3. 28, II. 10. 4, II. 12. 17, II. 20. 12, *BG* I. 4. 1, I. 23. 4, IV. 5. 13 etc.

<sup>30</sup> Still maintained by Veh, *op. cit.* 28. Cf. Teuffel, 223-4. Dahn, 19 regarded this as an affectation, but thought it the perverse affection of a sceptic in the face of outlandish Christian terms.

<sup>31</sup> E. g. ἡμικύλινδρος (*Aed.* I. 1. 32), σοφία μηχανική (*BP* II. 13. 26, λογοθέτης (*BG* III. 1. 28). Explanations of latinisms: *Aed.* IV. 5. 11, IV. 6. 16, VI. 3. 11, *BV* II. 26. 26, *BG* I. 15. 4, I. 23. 4, I. 23. 17, I. 26. 4, III. 28. 7 etc.

<sup>32</sup> Cf. e. g. Malchus, fr. 11: Γότθων, οὓς καὶ φοιδεράττας οἱ Ῥωμαῖοι καλοῦσι . . . , fr. 16: τοὺς προαγωγέας τῶν λημμάτων τῆς ἀρχῆς, οὓς δομεστίκους καλοῦσι Ῥωμαῖοι; Zosimus IV. 40. 5; and *after* Procopius, Agathias *Hist.* III.2 4, p. 194. 6 Bonn etc., Theophylact I. 14. 8, I. 4. 7 etc.

<sup>24</sup> Compare also Evagrius, *HE* IV. 27.

<sup>25</sup> See esp. the works of H. Braun, *Procopius Caesariensis qualenus imitatus sit Thucydides*, Diss. Erlangen (1885) and *Die Nachahmung Herodots durch Prokop*, Progr. Nürnberg, (1894). See also K. Krumbacher, *Gesch. der Byz. Lit.* 2 (1897) 233f., Rubin *passim*, *CQ* N. S. 14 (1964) 316f., and *Harvard Theological Review* 58 (1965) 161f.

<sup>26</sup> See A. Momigliano, in *The Conflict between Paganism and Christianity in the Fourth Century*, Oxford-Warburg Studies I (1963) 79f.

<sup>27</sup> Procopius himself kept secular and ecclesiastical history separate; he intended to write an ecclesiastical history which would cover all the matters deliberately excluded from the *Wars* (*BG* IV. 25. 13, *Anecd.* 11. 33). There is no sufficient indication that this would have been a satire - Downey, *op. cit.* 96 n. 28.

<sup>28</sup> *BP* I. 25. 31: ἱερεὺς . . . ὑπερ καλεῖν πρεσβύτερον νενομίκασι.

<sup>29</sup> *BV* II. 21. 21: τὰ Χριστιανῶν λόγια . . . ὑπερ καλεῖν εὐαγγέλια νενομίκασι.



the feature of Procopius' work that has led Veh, for example, to describe his conception of God as 'Hellenic'.<sup>41</sup> Clearly Teuffel's assumption that if Procopius were a Christian he would reveal his beliefs as a matter of course errs on the side of naïveté.

Most of the scholars who have discerned in Procopius a kind of deism rather than definite Christianity have picked out another feature of the *Wars* somewhat similar to the 'explanation' of Christianisms just discussed. This is the use in referring to God of such terms as τὸ κρείττον and τὸ θεῖον.<sup>42</sup> On this basis Dahn contended that Procopius was an adherent of "Theismus",<sup>43</sup> Teuffel that his views were "deistisch",<sup>44</sup> Veh that his conception of God was "Hellenic",<sup>45</sup> and Rubin that his theology was 'indistinct' ("verschwommen").<sup>46</sup> Even while arguing that Procopius used such terminology because he wanted to strike a middle course between an appearance of Christianity and one of out and out paganism – i.e. that he uses it selfconsciously, not naturally,<sup>47</sup> Rubin still wants to take it at face value, saying that it is "an sich farblos deistisch, bei P. aber mit seinen übrigen religiösen Begriffen vertauschbar."<sup>48</sup> It is however dangerous to base one's impressions entirely on these terms. In many cases Procopius uses the term ὁ θεός,<sup>49</sup> and I can find no essential difference between these and the places where he uses the 'deistic' terminology; it is therefore implausible to differentiate between them<sup>50</sup> or to deduce his attitude from the abstracts alone.<sup>51</sup> Moreover, it is quite mistaken even to lay too much stress on the frequency with which Procopius employs them, for Christian writers of all sorts employ them without hesitation when they want to introduce variety into their work,<sup>52</sup> and it is therefore simply false to suggest, as does Irmscher when discussing the similar language used by Agathias,<sup>53</sup> that the use of the adjective θεῖος is entirely classicising, without Christian significance. Nevertheless the neutral character of these abstracts is so much in line with Procopius' general avoidance of specific Christianisms in the *Wars* as to suggest that they are employed for a conscious end. They are paralleled

<sup>41</sup> See below.

<sup>42</sup> E.g. *BP* I. 7. 5, II. 11. 25, *BV* I. 9. 13, *BG* I. 24. 5 etc.

<sup>43</sup> Dahn, 181.

<sup>44</sup> Teuffel, 222.

<sup>45</sup> Veh, 21.

<sup>46</sup> Rubin, 334.

<sup>47</sup> Rubin, 331.

<sup>48</sup> Rubin, 334.

<sup>49</sup> E.g. *BP* II. 22. 2, *BG* I. 28. 27, IV. 35. 33 etc.

<sup>50</sup> Rubin, 333 f.

<sup>51</sup> Compare Herodotus' divergences in usage between τὸ θεῖον, τὸ δαίμονιον and ὁ θεός – cf. Jacoby, *RE* Supp. II. 480. Nearer to Procopius' own time, Ammianus uses *numen* and *deus* with no difference of meaning – cf. W. Ensslin, *Klio*, Beiheft XVI (1923) 51.

<sup>52</sup> τὸ θεῖον, a favourite of Herodotus, appears often in the works of Clement of Alexandria (cf. Stählin, *Wortregister* s. v. θεῖος). Cf. also Philost., *HE* 8. 3, Isid. Pel., *ep.* 5. 260, Evagrius, *HE* I. 11, IV. 17, IV. 24 etc.; many exx. of its use to mean 'divinity' – G. W. H. Lampe, *Patristic Lexicon*, fasc. 3 (1964) 619. τὸ κρείττον also appears frequently in Eusebius' *Vita Constantini* (I. 12, 16; II. 24, 25; 26, 67 etc.). Cf. also Sozomen, *HE* I. 6. 3; 8. 1; II. 6. 3 and exx. from other Christian authors cited by Lampe, *op. cit.*, 777.

<sup>53</sup> "Zur Weltanschauung des Agathias", *Wiss. Zeitschr. der Friedrich-Schiller-Universität Jena* (1963) 49, with n. 71.

exactly in the work of Procopius' imitator Agathias, who shares his stylistic ideals, and uses the same abstract terms to designate God, with similarly misleading effects upon modern critics.<sup>54</sup> Rubin is surely right when he suggests that they are a deliberate affectation, designed to place Procopius' references to God in the *Wars* in the common linguistic ground between Christianity and late paganism.<sup>55</sup>

Once Procopius' deliberate classicism has been fully appreciated we are less likely to assume, as has so often been done, that because the *Buildings* is, as a panegyric, to some extent artificial, the *Wars* must therefore represent a sincere and untrammelled expression of the writer's views.<sup>56</sup> In the *Buildings*, certainly, Procopius was under an obligation to place his work within the context of that Christianity honoured by the churches which he was extolling. Thus while he still sometimes uses explanatory phrases for Christian terms (for he was still aiming at purity of language),<sup>57</sup> he can in general adopt a completely Christian tone.<sup>58</sup> When a man enters the church of St. Sophia, he says (*Aed.* I. 1. 61), his mind is naturally turned towards God, and the historian records without comment how God helped Justinian when he was in difficulties (*Aed.* II. 2. 9). These and similar passages in the *Buildings*<sup>59</sup> are so unlike the tone of the *Wars* that it is natural to regard the non-official work as wholly sincere. This is wrong on two counts. First, the *Wars*, with its deliberate objectivity, is no less artificial than the *Buildings*, and second, there are traces, even in the *Wars*, of a warmer allegiance to Christianity than the objective formulae would suggest, and for which there can be no literary motive. In Procopius' tirade against John the Cappadocian, for example, he says that John was not restrained by θεοῦ λόγος or ἀνθρώπων αἰδώς (*BP* I. 24. 13), and goes on to describe among his crimes how instead of following the Christian rite when in church he would dress himself up in an outfit more typical of pagan priests and boast of his ascendancy over the Emperor and his immunity from evil wishers (*BP* I. 25. 10). In Procopius' opinion, God punished John

<sup>54</sup> Cf. e.g. II. 7. p. 79. 9, II. 29. p. 128. 3, III. 10. p. 158. 3 etc. Cf. M. Levchenko, *Viz. Vrem.* 3 (1950) 73 f., Veh, *op. cit.*, III. Teil, (1953) 27, S. Costanza, *Helikon* 2 (1962) 108, Irmscher, *op. cit.* (n. 53) 50.

<sup>55</sup> For non-Christian usages cf. the spurious (and probably Jewish) letter of Julian (Bidez and Cumont 204), and Porph., *de abst.* 3. 14, as well as Ammianus' *numen*. Procopius of Gaza is no doubt moved by the same motives as his namesake when in his classicising panegyric on Anastasius he speaks of παρὰ τοῦ κρείττονος δῶρα (p. 492. 15 Bonn), τὴν πρὸς τὸ κρείττον συγγένειαν (p. 494. 4) and δόγμα τι θεῖον (p. 495. 13).

<sup>56</sup> Veh, *op. cit.*, II. Teil, 28, cf. Dahn, 195.

<sup>57</sup> E.g. *Aed.* I. 1. 65, I. 4. 12, I. 4. 14 etc.

<sup>58</sup> E.g. *Aed.* I. 3. 1, using the word θεῖος without explanation.

<sup>59</sup> E.g. *Aed.* VI. 2. 15 f., cf. esp. 15: θρησκείαν γὰρ πλείους... (various heresies) (cf. *Cod. Just.* I. 5. 18. 4 (527) forbidding public offices to τοῦτο... (various heresies) enumerated) νοσοῦντας. Procopius is here using a Christian technical term). VI. 5. 6, V. 7. 3 etc.



for this (I. 25. 36 ἀλλ' ὁ θεὸς οἶμαι... ἐπὶ μέγα... αὐτῷ τὴν κόλασιν ἐξηρτύετο), for Procopius interprets the unfortunate fate which John suffered after being suspected of the killing of Bishop Eusebius of Cyzicus (I. 25. 37ff.) as God's vengeance upon him (ἐὼς... ἡ τοῦ θεοῦ δίκη ποινὰς αὐτὸν... ἐσπραττομένη). In such a context there can be no doubt that Procopius is referring, not to some abstraction, but to the Christian God. The same is true of his comment about Narses after the death of his enemy the Goth Totila; Narses never ceased, according to Procopius, to refer all to God, and the historian adds the comment ὅπερ καὶ ὁ ἀληθὴς λόγος ἐγίνετο (BG IV. 33. 1). Likewise in referring to the factions of Blues and Greens, Procopius says (BP I. 24. 5) that they do not even care if an ἀσέβημα ἐς τὸν θεόν is committed, since they have no regard for anything, whether human or divine. In more trifling cases, too, he sometimes loses sight of his classicising aim; for instance, he says that when the Tzanni became Christian, they changed ἐπὶ τὸ εὐσεβέστερον (BP I. 15. 25). Though we ought to discount the numerous passages in speeches where Procopius allows himself a more overtly Christian tone, such as would naturally be in order and indeed expected,<sup>60</sup> there are enough indications in the body of the text to allow us to conclude that Procopius naturally thought in Christian terms, and to confirm that the Abgar story, though unique of its kind, is nevertheless to be taken at its face value. And indeed, the *Secret History*, Procopius' least selfconscious work, is itself proof of this. Procopius includes among the misdeeds of Sergius, who, he says, was in great part responsible for Roman failure in Africa, the fact that he ignored an oath which he had sworn on the Gospels.<sup>61</sup> In the same chapter he speaks of "divine vengeance" striking down the guilty Solomon after he thought he had escaped (*Anecd.* 5. 38). And the most striking thesis of the *Secret History*, that Justinian is the embodiment of Antichrist,<sup>62</sup> is, if not to be taken too seriously,<sup>63</sup> at least a sign of Procopius' attachment to contemporary superstitious thought. Accordingly, though he criticizes in the *Secret History* Justinian's purges of heretics and his preoccupation with theology (below, p. 481), at no point in the work does he question the fact that heresies are divergences from the truth.<sup>64</sup>

<sup>60</sup> Many cited by Downey, *op. cit.*, 91.

<sup>61</sup> *Anecd.* 5. 28: τὸ τε... αὐτῷ πρὸς τῶν εὐαγγελίων ὁμωμοσμένα ἐν ἀλογίᾳ πεποιτημέ-  
ως...

<sup>62</sup> *Anecd.* 12. 14: 18. 11. Cf. B. Rubin, "Der Fürst der Dämonen," *Byz. Zeitschr.* 44 (1951) 469f., *id.*, *Zeitalter Justinians I* (1960) 200 and n. 546, pp. 441-54.

<sup>63</sup> The 'Suda' refers to the work as a *κωμωδία* (s. v. Procopius), and this is surely how it was taken by contemporaries. But Procopius claims to believe his assertion that Justinian and Theodora are demons - *Anecd.* 12. 14.

<sup>64</sup> Cf. *Anecd.* 11. 14: αἱρέσεις... Μοντανῶν τε καὶ Σαββατιανῶν καὶ ὅσαις ἄλλαις πλανῶσθαι αἱ τῶν ἀνθρώπων εἰδήσεις γινώσκαι. *πλάνη* was virtually a technical term used by Christians to describe pagan or heretical beliefs - Alan Cameron, *JRS* LV (1965) p. 22. It

It has often been noted that Procopius displays a belief in omens and prodigies. Records of abnormal events were of course a regular feature in ancient historiography,<sup>65</sup> yet the credulity which Procopius shows towards the various pietistic interpretations put on those which he narrates could not be compatible with the severe scepticism which is often attributed to him. At this point it is worth stating that Rubin is mistaken in taking as a sign of "Agnosticism" Procopius' habit of ending a story with some such phrase as ἀλλὰ ταῦτα μὲν εἴτε ταύτῃ εἴτε πῇ ἄλλῃ ἔχει, ἀφ' ἧμι ἐκάστῳ ὅπῃ ἂν τις βούληται ἐκλογίζεσθαι (BV I. 11. 31 etc.),<sup>66</sup> since it is merely a Herodotean formula, on a par with ἐρῶν ἐρχομαι (BP II. 22. 5, I. 10. 25 etc.), ἐμοὶ μὲν οὐ πιστὰ λέγοντες (BP I. 4. 14 etc.) and many others.<sup>67</sup> Moreover, he does not always apply this apparent *caveat* to his stories of miraculous happenings, but often simply reports them as fact. Thus it is with the tale of the ominous bursting of a wine jar before Belisarius' departure for Africa (BG III. 35. 6), or of the birth of a two-headed child at Edessa (BG IV. 14. 39), and while he expresses doubt about the Sybilline oracles (BG I. 24. 33) (a passage where the *caveat* phrase may justly be taken to have more than a purely formal significance), he accepts without question the story which he tells immediately before this about the mosaic picture of Theodoric at Naples which miraculously disintegrated when danger threatened Theodoric or his family (BG I. 24. 22 f.).<sup>68</sup> At one place Procopius actually represents himself as telling Belisarius that the sudden appearance of a spring of water was a sign from God of an easy victory (BV I. 15. 35).<sup>69</sup> Sometimes, also, he explicitly points out how an omen has been fulfilled, for example in the destruction of Antioch, which he says was presaged by two omens - a violent wind which uprooted the sacred cypresses, and later an earthquake which was said to have cost the lives of 300,000 Antiochenes (BP II. 15. 5-7). When recording a story about Marcian, later Emperor of the East, to the effect that once when he was taken prisoner by the Vandals while in Africa as *domesticus* of the general Aspar, an eagle hovered over his head, Procopius says that Genseric at once realised that this was a divine sign that Marcian would become Emperor and decided not to put him to death so

is interesting to see that while 'apologizing' for αἱρέσεις in the same sentence, Procopius so far forgets himself as to use the word *πλανῶσθαι*.

<sup>65</sup> Cf. e. g. for Livy, P. Saint-Denis, "Les énumérations de prodiges dans l'œuvre de Tite-Live," *Rev. Phil.* XVI (1942) 126f., for Tacitus, R. Syme, *Tacitus*, (1958) II. 522f., for Dio, F. Millar, *A Study of Cassius Dio*, Oxford (1964) 77.

<sup>66</sup> Rubin, 332. Cf. BG IV. 12. 35 etc., and cf. BG III. 13. 19.

<sup>67</sup> Cf. Braun, *Die Nachahmung*, 5f.

<sup>68</sup> Other omens and prodigies: BP II. 1. 22, BG I. 22. 5, I. 23. 5 (though Procopius here provides an explanatory phrase about the identity of the Apostle Peter).

<sup>69</sup> Προκόπιος ἔλεγεν, ὡς οὐδὲν διὰ τὴν χρεὶν τῇ τοῦ ὕδατος περίοδῳ... ἀλλ' ὅτι οἱ ξύμβολον εἶναι δοκεῖ... καὶ τοῦτο σφίσι προλέγειν τὸ θεῖον. ὅπερ... καὶ ἐγένετο... Cf. also BV I. 12. 4.



that the sign might be fulfilled and so that he himself might not fight in vain against God's will, for he realised, says Procopius, that "the will of God cannot be prevented by human contrivance" (*BV* I. 4.9). In another place, commenting on the appointment of the eunuch Narses to the Italian command, Procopius records an omen which was interpreted by an insignificant rustic as meaning that a eunuch would destroy the ruler of Rome (*BG* IV. 21. 17). At the time, says Procopius, everyone laughed at such an idea, as men are wont to do before the event, but when the prophecy was actually fulfilled they could only marvel at it. He goes on to say that it was perhaps in order that this omen should be fulfilled that Narses was sent against Totila, either because the Emperor somehow judged what was destined to happen, or because τύχη was taking care of the way things were fated.

It can hardly be doubted that Procopius shared the general belief in the trustworthiness of omens and prodigies. That he disapproved of astrology<sup>70</sup> is not surprising; astrology was a very different affair. In that it involved fatalism it was opposed by the Greek Fathers,<sup>70a</sup> and in the sixth century John Philoponus argued that the rejection of astrology was the greatest proof of piety and Christian faith.<sup>71</sup> In a few passages<sup>72</sup>, indeed, Procopius does seem to adopt a more rational tone towards miraculous happenings, but there is undoubtedly something here of an affected Herodotean rationalism, and they are infinitely outnumbered by the examples of his credulity.

I come now to the prevalence of the idea of τύχη in the *Wars*. This raises rather a different problem, since while many critics have taken it as a sign of paganism, Downey has put forward the opposite view, contending that Procopius' conception of the relation between Fortune and divine providence is not only Christian, but basically the same as St. Augustine's.<sup>73</sup> He draws particular attention to the places where Procopius seems to be subordinating Fortune to God, thus bringing the classical conception of Fortune within the Christian idea of Providence.<sup>74</sup> One such is at *BV* I. 18. 2, where Procopius describes God as marking out the way in which things are to happen, so that Fortune might have a path leading to the happenings that have been decided upon. Another is at *BG* IV. 12. 33f., where he specifically equates Fortune with ἡ τοῦ θεοῦ πρόπη, saying that men call it Fortune because they do not understand it.<sup>75</sup> Accordingly, Veh also thinks that Procopius 'humanised' Fortune,<sup>76</sup> and Rubin that he sometimes gives the pagan conception a Christian significance.<sup>77</sup> This would be an interesting case of a deliberate divergence

<sup>70</sup> Cf. *BV* I. 3. 11, *BP* II. 22. 5.

<sup>70a</sup> See D. Amand, *Fatalisme et liberté dans l'antiquité grecque*, Louvain (1945).

<sup>71</sup> *De Op. Mundi* p. 204. 3-7. Cf. also Agathias I. 1, p. 15. 7f.

<sup>72</sup> *BG* III. 29. 18, *BG* IV. 15. 23, cf. also *BP* II. 4. 1.

<sup>73</sup> Downey, 92f.

<sup>74</sup> Veh, II. Teil, 25f. Cf. Soyter, *op. cit.*, 107.

<sup>75</sup> Downey, 94.

<sup>76</sup> The sentiment is repeated almost verbatim at *Anecd.* 4. 44.

<sup>77</sup> Rubin, 332.

from the aim of classicism, elsewhere paramount, even if not always achieved, and it would be of the greatest importance for estimating Procopius' view of history. But Downey only cites three<sup>78</sup> passages where Procopius seems to be trying to reconcile Fortune and Providence; yet in many others he puts forward a distinctly pagan view, and there are numerous places where he seems to adhere to a stern fatalism that is the very antithesis of Christianity. Teuffel accordingly regarded him as a complete fatalist.<sup>79</sup> Which then is the right view?

First, his fatalism often takes a Herodotean form, with the use of such phrases as χρῆν γὰρ οἱ γενέσθαι κακῶς (*BP* I. 24. 31, *BG* I. 4. 4 etc.) and τὴν πεπρωμένην ἀνέπλησεν (*BV* II. 4. 20 etc.), or καὶ γὰρ ἔδει . . . . (*BP* II. 8. 14, cf. *BP* II. 13. 22 etc.),<sup>80</sup> which are on a par with his other Herodotean tags, and with similar catch phrases taken over from Thucydides.<sup>81</sup> As Stein justly remarks,<sup>82</sup> it is impossible to decide how far Procopius himself subscribed to the fatalism which he clothes in such formulaic phrases. We can see in fact that it would be a mistake to accept these fatalistic phrases too much at face value from the places where Procopius actually does seem to express doubt about the determinist explanation.<sup>83</sup> On closer examination, the 'pagan' passages about Fortune turn out to be similarly self-conscious. At *BG* II. 8. 1, for instance, Procopius speaks of the jealousy of Fortune: "but the jealousy (φθόνος) of Fortune then suffered pangs over the Romans, when it saw that things were going well for them at first, and, wishing to mix<sup>84</sup> some evil in with this, it devised strife between Belisarius and Constantine, for no worthwhile reason . . . ." This is a view which belongs to the Archaic period rather than the sixth century AD,<sup>85</sup> and Procopius' use of it can only be an affectation. In Christian times, moreover, φθόνος had acquired a specific meaning – it was used regularly in describing the Devil and sometimes simply means the Devil himself.<sup>86</sup> Elsewhere in the *Wars*, too, Procopius expresses the view of a blind fate ruling men. At *BG* III. 13. 16 (which Downey, surely mistakenly, takes as a Christianising passage) he gives a very pessimistic picture of the human condition; according to this passage, no one can avert evil if he is fated to suffer it, since Fortune will even take away his wits. Again the parallels are from Archaic Greece.<sup>87</sup> Some at least, therefore, of what Procopius has to say about Fortune is inserted from literary motives. Such is certainly the case at

<sup>78</sup> The other is *BG* III. 13. 15f., on which see below.

<sup>79</sup> Teuffel, 226f.

<sup>80</sup> Cf. Braun, *Die Nachahmung*, 40f.

<sup>81</sup> Braun, *ibid.* passim. Cf. μηχανάται τοιαῦτα (*BV* I. 7. 7 etc.), τὸ δὲ ἐθέλοντε οὐκ ἔχω εἰπεῖν (*BV* II. 28. 12 etc.) and many others.

<sup>82</sup> *BE* II. 715. Cf. also, Bury, ed. Gibbon<sup>2</sup>, IV (1901) 516.

<sup>83</sup> Veh, II. Teil, 26. Cf. *BP* I. 24. 19.

<sup>84</sup> Cf. e. g. Aesch., *Ag.* 947, *Pers.* 362, Pind., *Pyth.* 1. 2, Hdt., I. 321 etc. Cf. also *BP* I. 24. 525f.

<sup>85</sup> *The Greeks and the Irrational*, Berkeley (1951) 29f.

<sup>86</sup> See G. J. M. Bartelink, *Vigiliae Christianae* XII (1958) 37f.

<sup>87</sup> Dodds, *op. cit.*, 39.



BG IV. 33-24, where he introduces the idea that Fortune plays a game with the lives of men.<sup>80</sup> It is easy to see why Fortune, which played so large a part in pagan historiography and maintained its influence from classical times until the latest period of paganism,<sup>81</sup> has such a predominance in the *Wars*.

It is less easy, however, to be sure whether *all* Procopius' fatalistic references to Fortune are literary in character, and whether he did in fact share St. Augustine's view<sup>82</sup> that the conception of a divine Providence working in ways not always visible to men provided a Christian answer to the problem of explaining historical processes.<sup>83</sup> It is only to be expected that both pagan and Christian strands coexist in Procopius' thought, especially when it is a question of belief in fatalism, always so firmly rooted in popular religion, often in spite of official disapproval. It seems clear that he did in fact confuse, or identify, God and Fortune; at BP II. 9. 13f., for example, a passage where he talks of Fortune deciding quite arbitrarily which man to exalt, without thought of the consequences, his concluding remark is ἀλλὰ ταῦτα μὲν ὅπη τῷ θεῷ ἐβλόν ἐχέτω. At BV I. 19. 25 he says of ὁ θεός exactly what he says of Fortune at BG III. 13. 16, and at BG I. 24. 5-6 he simply equates the action of τύχη τις with τὸ κρείσσον. It would seem that Procopius had no consistent view of the relation between God and Fortune, yet it seems clear that in general he did hold to the view that God ordains human affairs according to some mysterious but just plan. This is for example implicit in such passages as BP II. 10. 4f., where he concludes that even if we cannot understand the means, everything must be ordered κατὰ λόγον. This is exactly the sort of case which illustrates Procopius' attitude. Though sometimes his view tends towards popular fatalism, in his more rational passages he does not turn to the pagan *deus ex machina*, Fortune, but to the only explanation available to any religion which maintains that the world is ordered according to principles of justice – that the injustice on any particular occasion must be only apparent, and that there is some reason for what has happened that will reveal it as part of God's plan. The same reasoning is apparent in Agathias, who has to record an earthquake which struck Constantinople, killing a prominent (and notoriously undesirable) citizen, one Anatolius (*Hist.* V. 3, p. 283. 13f.). Because Agathias takes it as axiomatic that God intervenes in the world according to eternal principles of justice,<sup>84</sup> he cannot say that the earthquake is God's way of punishing sin (for why then did others just as guilty as Anatolius escape?)

<sup>80</sup> Cf. e.g. Palladas, AP X. 72 and 80, Eunapius, V. S. 463 *ad. fin.* and on this conception cf. Irmscher, "Palladas," 170, Bowra, CQN. S. 10 (1960) 121 and now E. R. Dodds, *Pagan and Christian in an Age of Anxiety* (1965) 10-11. Agathias used the same idea in an epigram (AP IX. 768), surely deriving it from Palladas, though the idea goes back to Plato (*Laws* 644 de, 803b-804b, 903d).

<sup>81</sup> *De Civ. Dei* V. 9, 10, 11; cf. *Retract.* i. 1, 2.

<sup>82</sup> On this cf. C. N. Cochrane, *Christianity and Classical Culture*, Oxford (1940), esp. 478f.

<sup>83</sup> Cf. e.g. II. 1, p. 65. 14f., III. 10, p. 158. 3, IV. 22, p. 255. 2f. etc.

<sup>84</sup> Bowra, *op. cit.*, 118.

and has to suggest that there is some other penalty awaiting those who came through this earthquake unscathed. The logical conclusion (which Agathias is inclined to adopt) is that everything will come right in the next world (p. 287. 3f.). It is illuminating to see that in his speeches Procopius feels free to express the view that God intervenes on the side of the righteous,<sup>85</sup> which is again a basic assumption in Agathias' work, and was the official justification for Justinian's wars of conquest.<sup>86</sup> But we are surely not justified in supposing that in the passages cited by Downey Procopius was consciously putting forward an alternative Christian explanation of the historical process. The view there expressed of the relation between God and Fortune was not in any case exclusively Christian; Downey himself points to its likeness to what Julian the Apostate says in his letter to Themistius,<sup>87</sup> and it can be paralleled also from Macrobius and Proclus.<sup>88</sup> Procopius was not aiming at a Christianisation of classical historiography, and critics who have expected it of him have done him an injustice. There is too much of the specifically pagan idea of Fortune in the *Wars* to allow us to suppose that he had really thought out the implications of trying to combine such disparate conceptions as the Fortune explanation and the Providence explanation, and, to judge from Procopius' classicism as expressed in the *Wars*, we ought to regard the 'pagan' passages rather than the 'Christian' passages cited by Downey as more typical of the impression he wanted to give. He was not successful in achieving coherence, and has to yield here to Agathias, who went some way towards writing a Christian history in a completely classical framework. This Agathias achieved by avoiding the conception of Fortune (indeed, he lays particular emphasis on freewill – I. 1, p. 15), but by using instead the framework of ὕβρις always leading to punishment. By making the conception of ὕβρις a firmly moral one,<sup>89</sup> Agathias is able to use it to present a recognisably Christian picture of God intervening on behalf of the good and punishing the wicked. But blind Fortune is impossible to reconcile with the conception of just God, and Procopius accordingly falls into inconsistency.

Not only has he suffered from the failure to take into account his deliberate classicism, but also from a tendency to attribute to much of what he says in

<sup>85</sup> E.g. BV I. 12. 13f., BG I. 28. 27, II. 18. 22, III. 8. 21.

<sup>86</sup> Cf. also esp. BV I. 10. 18-20. Compare *Lib. Pont.* (Duchesne, 1886) I, p. 299. 1f.: "donavit ei (i.e. Narses) *Deus victoriam* . . . : p. 305. 5f.

<sup>87</sup> *Letter to Them.* 275 D, cf. Downey, 97.

<sup>88</sup> Macrobius, *Sat.* V. 16. 8, Proclus, *De prov. et fato* p. 158. 8 Cousin, and cf. Boethius, *Consol.* p. 122. 34 Peiper. Cf. P. Courcelle, *Les lettres grecques en Occident de Macrobe à Cassiodore*, Paris (1948) 17, 288.

<sup>89</sup> Especially conspicuous is II. 10, where he explicitly compares the Franks at Casilinum with that of the Persians at Marathon and the Avars at Scilly. For Agathias all are examples of punishment following sin (ἀδικία and ἀνομία), and in the case of the Franks, their sin lay in plundering Christian churches in Italy (p. 65. 2f.), which Agathias describes as ἀδικία καὶ θεοῦ ἀθετησιμία (p. 65. 17).



the *Wars* far more importance than it would have merited in Procopius' own day. There are no signs that a contemporary audience would necessarily have deduced from the *Wars* that the author was 'cool' towards Christianity. He was expected to write in the classical manner, and this he did. Moreover, even when their subject matter was Christian, Christian writers often took over what seems like surprisingly pagan language, with, it seems, no feeling of incongruity.<sup>98</sup> In a secular work this would naturally be much more pronounced. We can see this demonstrated in the epigrams of Agathias' *Cycle*,<sup>99</sup> many of which are completely pagan in inspiration and peopled with pagan gods and pagan imagery.<sup>100</sup> It is a great mistake to regard these epigrams at face value, as is sometimes done,<sup>101</sup> for funerary inscriptions show that the tendency to use traditional (and therefore pagan) language and forms was deeply rooted even among ordinary people, without necessarily affecting in any way their genuinely Christian sentiment.<sup>102</sup> Surely we have the same phenomenon in the field of history; it seems therefore misguided of Downey to say that "the pagan flavour of his (Procopius') writings was calculated to enhance the success of his book," because "the times seem to have been easy-going in such matters."<sup>103</sup> The reign of Justinian, with its fierce persecution of pagans, was anything but easy-going,<sup>104</sup> yet there is no sign that the *Wars*, for all its pagan flavour, earned any disapproval on that score – a sure sign that the pagan flavour, like that in Agathias' epigrams, was expected and understood.

Many of the previous discussions of Procopius' 'scepticism' have been misdirected because their authors have tended to lay too much stress on his genuinely critical turn of mind,<sup>104a</sup> especially as shown in his political views. His attitude to Justinian's persecutions of heretics and pagans really belongs to this category. Procopius' remarks about this illustrate very well the differences between his three works. In the *Buildings* he gives the official view, that Justinian brought about religious unity ("finding that doctrine was at first wavering (πλυνωμένην) and tending inevitably towards plurality, he crushed

<sup>98</sup> See H. Hagendahl, *Latin Fathers and the Classics*, Göteborg, (1958), esp. 382f.

<sup>99</sup> On which see now *JHS* 86 (1966).

<sup>100</sup> See R. Keydell, s. v. Epigramm in *Real. f. Ant. u. Christ.* V (1958).

<sup>101</sup> E. g. P. Waltz, "L'Inspiration païenne et le sentiment chrétien dans les épigrammes funéraires du VI<sup>e</sup> siècle," *L'Acropole* 6 (1931) 14. J. Irmscher, "Zur Weltanschauung des Agathias," 48 and Levchenko, *op. cit.*, 73.

<sup>102</sup> P. Courcelle, "Quelques symboles funéraires du néo-platonisme latin," *Rev. des Ét. Anc.* XLVI (1944) 70, Waltz, *op. cit.*

<sup>103</sup> Downey, 101–2.

<sup>104</sup> Cf. esp. C. Diehl, *Justinien*, Paris (1901) 552f.

<sup>104a</sup> I cannot however accept the common view that *BP* I. 7. 22–3 shows that Procopius disapproved of monks (Downey, 96); though he describes how they failed to hold their position at Amida, he says nothing here against monks as such, and τῶν Χριστιανῶν οἱ σωφρονέστατοι, ὅσοις καλεῖν μοναχοὺς νενομίστασιν (*loc. cit.*) is not irony (Rubin, 329) but affectation (cf. *CQ* N. S. 14 (1964) 317).

all the pathways to error and set the faith firmly on one foundation" – *Aed.* I. 1. 9). In the *Secret History* the persecutions appear in a very different light; the Emperor acted "under the pretext of piety, for putting men to death did not seem to him to be murder unless the victims shared his own persuasion" (*Anecd.* 13. 7). We can see that this hostility represents Procopius' real view from the contempt for sectarianism and doctrinal dispute that he shows in the *Wars* (*BG* I. 3. 6f.). Accordingly Justinian's preoccupation with theology seemed to Procopius to be the cause of culpable negligence of the conduct of the war (*Anecd.* 18. 29) – again his real opinion, for he expresses it again, though of course more guardedly, in the *Wars* (*BG* III. 35. 11), and goes so far as to put into the mouth of a conspirator against the Emperor a contemptuous reference to the way in which he sits unguarded at dead of night discussing the Scriptures with a bunch of ancient priests (*BG* III. 32. 9).<sup>105</sup> His attitude to theological speculation seems in general to have been one of objective curiosity; he tells us, indeed, that he meant to write a book about it, though in view of the bitterness of the *Secret History* we may wonder whether it would have been "a document of some significance in the literature of toleration," as Bury thought.<sup>106</sup> In opposing the ferocity of Justinian's persecutions Procopius can hardly have been unusual.<sup>107</sup> The terror struck at many men of rank and standing, probably in Procopius' own circle, for John of Ephesus claims to have denounced "a mob of grammarians, sophists, scholastici and doctors,"<sup>108</sup> and many senators and nobles were tortured and put to death.<sup>109</sup> If there had been the slightest suspicion of paganism in Procopius, we may guess that he would have suffered the same fate. It was at any rate only natural that a man who had seen persecution on this scale should feel sickened at the sight, and hardly less so that Justinian, whose mission to Asia Minor in 542 led to 70,000 forcible conversions,<sup>110</sup> should seem to him a monster dealing in death. Procopius and Agathias are important representatives of a class of Christians who, while holding to their Christianity felt complete revulsion at the manifestations of bigotry that were part of Justinian's official policy.<sup>111</sup>

<sup>105</sup> The fact of Justinian's overriding interest in theology was undoubtedly true, for Corippus makes Justin II refer to it in plain terms on his entry into his consulship on Jan. 1st. 566 (*Just.* II. 265f.).

<sup>106</sup> *LRE* II. 428.

<sup>107</sup> *Rev. de l'Orient chrét.* II. 481f.

<sup>108</sup> *Joh. Eph., loc. cit.* Cf. *Aed.* VI. 2. 14f., describing the official view of a similar procedure in Egypt.

<sup>109</sup> But his project of writing a history of the church shows that he was not at all of appreciating that men might be moved by sectarian motives, as suggested by *Speculum* 23 (1948) 286. Both Coster and Patch, *Speculum* 22 (1947) 443–5, simply take over wholesale the view of Procopius as a sceptic, and proceed to argue from it.

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But most of the *studium et ira* which makes Procopius such an interesting writer was directed not against religion or religious policy, but against Justinian himself, and indeed anyone who took sides against Belisarius.<sup>112</sup> It is possible to discern in the *Wars* the germs of the abuse hurled at the Emperor in the *Secret History*,<sup>113</sup> and while Procopius is as circumspect as he can bring himself to be, the overall impression left by the *Wars* is one of veiled criticism of Imperial policy. But we ought not to be misled by this evidence of Procopius' critical approach into assuming that it necessarily extended towards Christianity, nor indeed into blinding ourselves to the fact that it is as much sheer bias as reasoned criticism.

In judging the literature of an age in which a complete synthesis between Christianity and the classical tradition had yet to be achieved, we often tend to make the mistake of expecting every writer to give a complete and coherent picture of his religious position. This is unreasonable for any author, and doubly so for Procopius, who was actually trying to give a *false* impression. When Bury says that he was "at core a pagan," that "he could not think in Christian terms, he was not able to handle the new religious conceptions,"<sup>114</sup> he is suggesting that Procopius fell back on the old classical conception of history because he had no sympathy with the new. But surely Procopius never even looked for a Christian interpretation; he was satisfied with the framework of secular history as it stood and had no wish to transform it. He takes over traditional conceptions because they belong in the genre, and because he is not always consistent he seems either to be wavering between Christian and pagan views, or else detached from both. But I suggest that there is little to support the conception of him as an uncompromising sceptic, and that while the powerful influence which tradition exercised over his mind no doubt produced some ambivalence in his religious views, he was not only a Christian but a conventional one.

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<sup>112</sup> Rubin, *Zeitalter* I, p. 173f.

<sup>113</sup> Cf. Bury, *LRE* II 424f. and esp. Rubin, *Zeitalter* I *loc. cit.*

<sup>114</sup> *LRE* II (1889) 179. The view expressed in Bury's 2nd edition of Gibbon (IV, 516 (1901)) allows more for literary affectation.

Note: I am grateful to Professor R. Browning for kindly reading a draft of this article.

## HERODOTUS AND THUCYDIDES IN AGATHIAS

The question of Agathias's imitation of Herodotus and Thucydides has already been treated by G. Franke, who dealt with what he considered to be verbal borrowings.<sup>1</sup> But it is worth examining the examples in more detail, for they will tell us much about the methods and aims of Agathias and his contemporaries and successors as well as illustrating the practice of "imitatio" in the early Byzantine period. Agathias himself confesses his aims (III. 1 p. 138. 12): δέον . . . τοὺς πάλαι σοφοὺς σχολαίτερον ἀναλέγεσθαι μιμήσεως ἕκατι ἅπαντά τε τὰ ἐκασταχοῦ ζυμπερόμενα γνωματεύειν ἐς τὸ ἀκριβὲς καὶ ἀναπυνθάνεσθαι. And in another telling passage he lets us see what he thinks fitting for history – the striving for archaism (III. 5 p. 147. 3 ἡμᾶς δὲ οὐδὲν, οἶμαι, τὸ κωλύον . . . τῇ ἀρχαιοτάτῃ χρῆσθαι προσήγορίζ, ἐπεὶ καὶ ξυγγραφῇ μᾶλλον προσήκει). Such an attitude was the respectable and traditional one for those who, like Agathias, thought of themselves as belonging to the great tradition of the classical historians.<sup>2</sup> But whereas a Seneca could say with confidence that he always did know where to find the words "Praeterea condicio optima est ultimi: parata verba invenit, quae aliter instructa novam faciem habent" (Ep. 79. 5), imitation in Agathias's day was rather a different thing; it was now no longer a question of giving a clever new twist to an old theme and thereby winning gasps of admiration from the audience, but of seeking out with infinite labour words and phrases which were genuinely "old" or "Attic". Already it seemed enough to reproduce the words of the ancients without adaptation; this showed learning indeed.<sup>3</sup> We can see admirably illustrated in

\* I am grateful to Mr. R. Browning and Professor A. D. Momigliano for reading an earlier version of this paper.

<sup>1</sup> Quaestiones Agathianae, Breslauer Philologische Abhandlungen 47, Trebnitz (1914). G. Spyropoulos, Κατὰ τί μιμεῖται Ἀγαθίας Ἡρόδοτον καὶ Προκόπιον; Diss. Athen (1892) has so far been inaccessible to me. On its value however cf. K. Krumbacher, B. Z. 4 (1895) 165 and Franke, *o. c.* p. 3. I shall deal here only with Franke's suggestions.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. eg. Lucian, Hist. Conscr. § 15 f. It was simply a form of "Atticism", which meant by now the imitation of any classical author – hence Herodotus's eligibility. Cf. G. Böhlig, Untersuchungen zum rhetorischen Sprachgebrauch der Byzantiner, Berlin (1956) 2.

<sup>3</sup> Even before Agathias's day Atticism could only be achieved by great labour – Dion. Hal. περὶ τῶν ἐν μελέταις πλημμελουμένων, 7 ἐν τῶν ὀνομάτων τοῖς ἀρχαίοις συνήθη ἦν καὶ γνώριμα, ὧν νῦν ἡ χρῆσις ἐξερρόηκεν· οἱ γὰρ μὲν ἂν ἐὰν γινώσκουσιν ἐξ ὧν τοὶ ἡμεῖς δ' ἂν αὐτὰ εὐκότως ἐκκλίνομεν. Lucian, Rhet. Praec. 9 f. talks of "αἰγίβητος ὡς ἔστιν ὡς ἔστιν ὡς ἔστιν" words long buried" and bringing forth νεκροὺς ἐξ μνήσιν παλαιούς.



Agathias the beginnings of Byzantine sterility and the sharp dichotomy between the popular and the literary language.<sup>4</sup>

What then of Herodotus and Thucydides? The question is how far Agathias really knew the texts, how far he looked to them for factual details to insert into his own work and how far his imitation extended beyond the natural linguistic borrowings of one who was trying to write in the classical style.

Franke suggests that Agathias did draw on Herodotus for subject matter and that he had an intimate knowledge of the text. The most important passage for this argument is the section in which Agathias gives some account of Persian customs and chronology (II. 22 f., pp. 113–25).<sup>5</sup> It is suggested that Agathias looked back for subject matter to Herodotus's ethnographical excursus on the Persians (I. 131 f.). But we know that Agathias had excellent sources for his account of the Sassanid kingdom<sup>6</sup> and it is a priori probable that what he has to say about Persian customs and like exposure of the dead comes from the same source. Agathias was indeed writing another ethnographical excursus<sup>7</sup> and he did include some of the same standard themes as Herodotus – *ταφάι, γάμοι, θεοί, έορταί, θυσίαι*,<sup>8</sup> but he had other and more up-to-date sources of information. In view of his use of sources in his account of the Sassanid kingdom at IV. 24 f., where he seems to look no further than to Procopius to supplement his Persian information,<sup>9</sup> it would be surprising if here he looked back to Herodotus for facts as well as language. With these preliminary remarks I can pass on to discussion of specific passages.

(a) The first passage adduced by Franke is Ag. II. 21 p. 113.13 f., an alleged borrowing from Hdt. I. 140:

Ag. οὕτω δὲ ἔρημόν τε καὶ  
ἀκάλυπτον κατὰ τὸν πάτριον  
ἔθεντο νόμον, κυσί τε ἅμα καὶ  
τῶν ὀρνέων τοῖς ὅσα μίαν καὶ  
νεκρόβωρα παρανάλωμα  
γενήσμενον.

Hdt. οὐ πρότερον θάπτεται  
ἀνδρὸς Πέρσῃ ὁ νέκυς  
πρὶν ἂν ὑπ' ὀρνιθοῦ ἢ  
κυνὸς ἐλκυσθῇ

Here Franke argues that the use of the word ἀκάλυπτον by Agathias guarantees the borrowing. But there is nothing here that could not have resulted simply from two writers having described the same custom.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. eg. Böhlig, o. c. (n. 2) 1 f.

<sup>5</sup> Franke, o. c. (n. 1) 10 and 11.

<sup>6</sup> His friend Sergius obtained material for him from the Royal Annals of Persia – IV. 30 p. 273 f.

<sup>7</sup> As he does on the Franks – I. 2 f.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. K. Trüdinger, Studien zur Gesch. der griech.-röm. Ethnographie. Diss. Basel (1918).

<sup>9</sup> Cf. my paper Agathias and Cedrenus on Julian, JRS 53 (1963) 91 f.

Braun with similar implausibility suggests that Procopius BP I. 11.35 and I. 12.4 are borrowings from the same source.<sup>9</sup> Moreover, there is a distinct difference between the accounts of Agathias and Herodotus; the latter, unlike Agathias, distinguishes between the practices of the Magi and those of the rest of the people, and his whole account is much shorter, so that we should have to suppose that while deriving most of his material from elsewhere Agathias had to go back to Herodotus to look up this notorious fact. If we needed to find a source for what was commonplace in Greek and Latin accounts of Persian religion,<sup>10</sup> quite apart from the obvious knowledge of Agathias's informant, we should only have to look as far as Procopius, whose work Agathias was continuing; and Agathias had read the relevant section of Procopius with some care.<sup>11</sup>

(b) We are told to compare II. 25 p. 118.17 with Hdt. I. 94:

Ag. Πολλοὺς δὲ καὶ ἄλλους θεοὺς  
ὀνομάζουσι καὶ ἱλάσκονται  
τοῦτο Ἑλληνικόν.

Hdt. Λυδοὶ δὲ νόμοισι μὲν  
παραπλησίοισι χρέωνται  
καὶ Ἑλλήνες.

But to postulate such a borrowing, even tentatively, would be to argue in Agathias a phenomenal knowledge of Herodotus and an ignorance of the current meaning of Ἑλληνικόν in his own day.<sup>12</sup> But his use of the phrase τοὺς παρ' Ἑλλήσι θρυλλομένους at II. 24 p. 117. 16 surely shows that in both passages the comparison is with pagans, not simply Greeks, as is the case with the Herodotus passage. Herodotus IV. 59 θεοὺς μὲν μόνους τοῦσδε ἱλάσκονται is in any case more similar to the words of Agathias, though again hardly a certain borrowing. Not only is the case in question not a borrowing, but the very words on which Franke's case depends – τοῦτο Ἑλληνικόν have actually been suspected as a gloss.<sup>13</sup>

(c) Again, we are told to compare Agathias II. 25 p. 118. 19 with Herodotus III. 16:

<sup>9</sup> H. Braun, Die Nachahmung Herodots durch Prokop. Progr. Nürnberg (1894) 26. In neither case is there any verbal similarity with Herodotus.

<sup>10</sup> Eg. Cic. Tusc. I. 45. 108, Justin XL. 3. 5, Curtius Rufus VII. 5 (24) 40, Strabo XV 3. 20. 735. A Persian statement on the topic can be found in the Pahlavi book of the Dādistān-i Dinik 15 (SBE 18 [1882] trans. West). It does not of course follow that if one of the later statements depends on Herodotus (cf. n. 15a below): Agathias did so too. The more statements, of whatever origin, the more widely known and truly commonplace the subject matter.

<sup>11</sup> In his excursus on the Sassanid kingdom (IV. 24 p. 258 f.) he follows Procopius BP I. 2 for the story of Arcadius (p. 264. 18 f.) and again at p. 265. 20 (BP I. 2. 8) and 266. 4–8 (BP I. 2. 11) – cf. my article in JRS 53 (1963). But it would be absurd to suppose that Agathias only knew of the Persian custom of exposure from either Herodotus or Procopius – cf. the epigram he quotes at II. 31 p. 134. 7.

<sup>12</sup> P. Courcelle, Les lettres grecques en Occident de Macrobe à Cassiodore, Paris (1948) ix n. 5, A. D. Nock, Sallustius, Cambridge (1926) xlvii. Proc. BP I. 2. 19 ὅς παλαιᾶς δόξης ἦν νῦν Ἑλληνικὴν καλεῖν νενομίσται etc.

<sup>13</sup> H. Reiffel, Über den Sprachgebrauch des Agathias, Progr. Kempten (1894) 32.







only on this word, and not, as Franke strangely thinks, also on the use of *μάλιστα* and *μήτε ἄλλως*, standing for οὐδὲ ἄλλον in Herodotus). But even though *ἐναπονήζομαι* does seem to be a Herodotean word (only otherwise at II. 172), it would be unsafe to assume that Agathias had this passage of Herodotus in mind, for the sanctity of water was another commonplace.<sup>19</sup> There is a similar case at Agathias III. 12 p. 166. 14, which Franke alleges is a borrowing, or rather an expansion, of Herodotus I. 138:

Ag. ὁμολογείσθω τὰ Περσῶν  
ἤθη βέβαια καὶ πιστὰ καὶ  
οἷα διὰ παντὸς ἐμμένειν  
ταῖς ἐσομέναις συνθήκαις.

Hdt. αἰσχιστον δὲ αὐτοῖσι  
τὸ ψεύδεσθαι  
νενόμισται.

Hardly, I think, a clear borrowing; the idea of truthfulness as a Persian virtue was not confined to Herodotus – cf. eg. [Plato], *Alc.* 122 etc., Plutarch, *de vitando aere alieno* 5. 829c, etc.

(f) Franke's last case of this is the story of the false Smerdis (Agathias II. 25 p. 122. 18), which he says is an abbreviation of Herodotus's version (III. 67–79). He compares Agathias II. 25 p. 122. 18 with Herodotus III. 79:

Ag. οὐ γὰρ ἂν οἱ ἀμφὶ

Δαρεῖον Πέρσαι, Σμέρδιος πάλαι  
τοῦ μάγου μετὰ Καμβύσην τὸν  
Κύρον τὴν βασιλείαν ὑποσு-  
λήσαντος, συμφορὰν ἐποιῶντο  
τὸ γεγενημένον, καὶ αὐτὸν τε  
τὸν Σμέρδιν ἀπέκτειναν, καὶ  
πολλοὺς τῶν ὅσοι ὁμογνώμονες  
ἐκείνῳ ἐτύγγανον ὄντες, ὡς οὐκ ἐξὸν  
τοῖς μάγοις τῷ βασιλείῳ θῶκῳ  
ἐνωραῖζεσθαι καὶ ἱζάνειν. οὕτω δὲ  
αὐτοῖς οὐ μᾶλλον ἔδοξαν εἶναι οἱ  
φόνιοι, μᾶλλον μὲν οὖν καὶ μελίσκος  
ἄξιον μνήμης, ὥστε ἀμέλει τὴν  
στάσιν ἐκείνην Μαγοφόνια ἐορτὴν  
ἐνομασθῆναι καὶ θυσίας  
ἐπιτελεῖσθαι χαριστηρίους.

Hdt. οἱ δὲ Πέρσαι . . . σπασάμενοι δὲ

τὰ ἐγχειρίδια ἐκτεινον ὅκου τινὰ  
μάγον εὕρισκον· εἰ δὲ μὴ νῦν  
ἐπελθοῦσα ἔσχε, ἔλιπον ἂν  
οὐδένα μάγον. ταύτην τὴν  
ἡμέρην θεραπεύουσι Πέρσαι  
κοινῇ μάλιστα τῶν ἡμερέων  
καὶ ἐν αὐτῇ ὁρτὴν μεγάλην ἀνά-  
γουσι, ἣ κέκληται ὑπὸ Περσέων  
μαγοφόνια, ἐν τῇ μάγον οὐδένα  
ἔξεστι φανῆναι ἐς τὸ φῶς, ἀλλὰ  
κατ' οἴκους ἐσωτοῦς οἱ μάγοι  
ἔχουσι τὴν ἡμέρην ταύτην.

<sup>19</sup> Pliny, *NH* XXX. 6, Justin *XLI*. 3, Strabo *XV*. 3. 14. 732 and esp. 16. 733, Diog. Laert. I. 6. The taboos described by Herodotus and Agathias are typical of the rules laid down in the sacred books – cf. Vasishtha VI. 11 (SBE 14 [1882] 36, trans. Bühler).

The similarities indicated are Franke's. Not even here, however, are we on firm ground, although it is clear that Agathias is telling the same story as Herodotus. For again there is no direct imitation, only the use of words like *μάγοι* and *ἀποκτείνω*. The story was not confined to Herodotus,<sup>20</sup> and Ctesias, though his story differs from Herodotus's, actually gives the name *Μαγοφόνια*;<sup>21</sup> his version may represent elements of Iranian legend overlying the historical core,<sup>22</sup> which gives some indication of how deeply rooted the story was even at that early date. It was clearly common knowledge to anyone writing about Persia.<sup>23</sup>

None of these alleged borrowings is therefore certain. But there are other places in this section where we might have expected Agathias to use Herodotus, if this sort of borrowing is the kind that it is appropriate to look for; did he?

First, if he did use Herodotus, it could only have been to supplement his other sources. Take for example the full account of the custom of exposing the dead, which Suolahti ascribes, no doubt correctly, to oral sources – that is, the sort of traveller's tale with which Agathias's friend Sergius must have filled out the material he obtained from the Persian archives.<sup>24</sup> Agathias cannot have gone to Herodotus for his remarks about incestuous marriage among the Persians either, for he would have found only (I. 135) *γαμέουσι δὲ ἕκαστος αὐτῶν πολλὰς μὲν κουριδίας γυναῖκας, πολλῶ δ' ἔτι πλεῦνας παλλακὰς κτῶνται*. Part at least of Agathias's remarks on this subject do indeed come from Greek sources, but their ancestry becomes apparent when we see that he goes on to speak of the famous exempla Semiramis and Parysatis.<sup>25</sup> This custom of next-of-kin marriage

<sup>20</sup> Cf. Dionys. Milet, *FGH* 687 f. 2, Diod. *XXXI*. 147, Strabo *XV*. 3. 24. 736, Justin *I*. 10, Ammianus Marcellinus *XXIII*. 6. 36, and, among the Byzantine chroniclers, Syncellus p. 209 Bonn, Leo Grammaticus p. 47 Bonn. The story was recorded also by Darius on the Behistun inscription, § 10. 1. 26 f. (Kent, *Old Persian*, Newhaven [1950] 108).

<sup>21</sup> Ctesias *FGH* 688 f. 13 . . . ἀγεται τοῖς Πέρσαις ἐορτὴ τῆς μαγοφονίας, καθ' ἣν Σφενδαδάτης ὁ μάγος ἀνήρηται. Gray, *Enc. of Relig. and Ethics*, s. v. Festivals and Fasts (Iranian), p. 874 connects the accounts of Herodotus, Ctesias and Agathias; but imitation, or even dependence, is not proved merely because two writers describe the same subject.

<sup>22</sup> A. Christensen, *Les gestes des rois dans les traditions de l'Iran antique*, Paris (1936) 120 f.

<sup>23</sup> And even if Procopius's use of the phrase *ἐπιβατεύειν ὀνόματός τινος* (*BP* I. 23. 23, II. 14. 11, *BV* I. 11. 4 etc.) comes from Hdt. III. 63. 3 it does not thereby follow that Procopius – or Agathias, his reader – knew the whole passage of Herodotus.

<sup>24</sup> J. Suolahti, *On the Persian Sources used by the Byzantine Historian Agathias*, *Studia Orientalia* 13 (1947), Helsinki. Some of Agathias's material is undoubtedly of popular origin (Christensen, *o. c.* [n. 22] 81), while other parts seem to be influenced by a Syrian bias traceable, like the popular material, to Sergius, as I have argued in the paper cited at n. 8 above.

<sup>25</sup> Agathias is giving his own interpretation of a commonplace Ctesian motif. Although Sextus Julius Africanus is behind the string of references to Semiramis as the prototype of Persian incest (*Joh. Mal.* 18 = *Chron. Pasch.* 65 = *Geo. Mon.* I. 4 de



<sup>40</sup> (Khvēdhvaghdas), one of the fundamentals of Zoroastrianism<sup>26</sup> (unsuccessfully disowned by modern Parsees), seemed to most of the Greek and Roman writers on the subject to be particularly striking and particularly distasteful;<sup>27</sup> but the origin of the Greco-Roman stories about Semiramis and Parysatis in the context of Persian incest lies not in Herodotus but Ctesias, who almost totally displaced Herodotus as an authority on Persian matters.<sup>28</sup>

Again, Herodotus contributes nothing to the brief résumé of Persian chronology with which Agathias provides us (II. 25 p. 119–II. 26 p. 122). The date of 1306 years for the Assyrians (II. 25 p. 120. 6) is Ctesian again, as against Herodotus's 520 (I. 95).<sup>29</sup> Agathias's Median date comes from the same source. Clearly he takes his place, in this section of his work, as but one in the long line of chronographers who looked only to Ctesias,<sup>30</sup> when he has something to add – i.e. the surprising figure of 270 years for Parthian rule (some 200 years too short) – it comes, reasonably enough, for it is the Ctesian material that is supplementing the Persian, and not vice versa, from his Persian sources.<sup>31</sup> Nor is there any room for Herodotus in the rest of the passage (II. 26 p. 122–II. 27 p. 124), which is all concerned with the founder of the Sassanid dynasty and, except for the Smerdis story already discussed, all from Persian sources.

But this is only what we might have expected, in view of Herodotus's reputation as a "liar".<sup>32</sup> The pages of Diogenes Laertius provide us with

Boor = Leo gr. p. 15 B = Cedr. I. 29 B = Glycas II. 43), it is Ctesias's version (F. Gr. H 688 F I. 4) that has been worked up. The incest motif had intruded by the time of Pompeius Trogus (Justin I. 2. 8) and was well established by Agathias's day (cf. *Proc. Anecd.* I. 9). The same must have been true of Parysatis (Ctesias F. Gr. H. 688 F 16).

<sup>26</sup> Eg. the *Dādistān-i Dīnīk* 77. 6, 78. 19 (SBE 19 [1882] 225. 232, trans. West).

<sup>27</sup> Xanthus ap. Clem. Alex., *Strom.* III. 11. 1 Stählin, Catullus XC. 3 f. Strabo XV 3. 20. 735, Curtius Rufus VIII. 2 (8). 19, Diog. Laert. I. 7, Origen, c. Cels. VI. 80. 693 etc.

<sup>28</sup> The chronographers invariably followed Ctesias, and not only for chronographical details – eg. on Semiramis, Euseb. *Cramer* II. 156. 4, *Chron.* I. 26 f. (Castor, Diod., Cephallion).

<sup>29</sup> Diod. II. 21 gives 1360 for Ctesias's date, though at II. 28 we find *ἐτη πλείω τῶν γυλίων καὶ τριακοντίων*. Syncellus however, quoting Diod. II. 21 (p. 313. 18) guarantees *πλείω τῶν γυλίων καὶ τριακοντίων*. At p. 677. 1 Syncellus repeats Agathias's figure as he does the whole passage. Other traces of Ctesias's figure are Augustine's date of 1305 years (*Civ. Dei* XVIII. 21) and Eusebius's 1300 (*Chron.* I. 32. 10. 12 [Cramer II. 156. 5], cf. *Sync.* 318. 4).

<sup>30</sup> Rawlinson's list of those who followed Ctesias for Median chronology is as follows: Cephallion, Castor, Polybius, Aemilius Sura, Pompeius Trogus, Nicolaus of Damascus, Diodorus, Strabo, Velleius Paterculus, Clement of Alexandria, Eusebius, Augustine, Sulpicius Severus, Agathias, Eustathius, Syncellus (*Five Great Monarchies* III, London [1865] 168 n.).

<sup>31</sup> Th. Nöldeke, *Gesch. der Perser u. Araber . . . aus der arabischen Chronik des Tabari*, Leyden (1879) xvi. n. 3.

<sup>32</sup> A. D. Momigliano, *The Place of Herodotus in the History of Historiography*, *History* 43 (1958) 1–13 = *Secondo Contributo alla storia degli Studi Classici* (1960) 29–44. Cf. Cic., *de Leg.* I. 1. 5, *de Div.* II. 116.

illustration:<sup>33</sup> πρὸς τοῦτοις καταγιγνώσκουσιν Ἡροδότου οἱ τὰ περὶ μάγων γράψαντες· μὴ γὰρ ἂν ἐς τὸν ἥλιον βέλη Ξέρξην ἀκοντίσαι μὴδ' εἰς τὴν θάλατταν πέδας καθεῖναι, θεοὺς ὑπὸ τῶν μάγων παραδεδομένους. If Herodotus had really known about the Persians he would not have ascribed to them actions contrary to their religion – such at least was the basis of ancient criticism of him, whether well-founded or not. And among the many Greek and Latin accounts of Persian religion there are indeed very few imitations of him. Agathias, furthermore, had access through Sergius to sources which lent his work authority enough to make it a serious text for modern students of Zoroastrianism. In no case is there a resemblance so striking as to render it certain that Agathias used Herodotus at all in this section; nor did he need to when there was such excellent reporting so close at hand. When he does cite a Greek authority (II. 24 p. 117. 20) it is not Herodotus; and when his excursus takes him temporarily from the description of Sassanid practice to the inclusion of information from Greek sources, his borrowings (unacknowledged) derive from Herodotus's rival, Ctesias. It is not quite the same with the excursus on the Franks (I. 2–7; 19; II. 5; 14), even though here too Agathias must have derived most of his information from a contemporary, if not Frankish, source.<sup>34</sup> For here he does incorporate some facts which belong to the common stock of German ethnography, and something at least has come to him from Asinius Quadratus, if only indirectly (cf. I. 6 p. 27. 1). But we are able to compare the Persian excursus directly with its supposed model and thence to see that any borrowing that is there is well and truly hidden.

This suggests that it is wrong in principle to look for imitations of Herodotus in facts taken from his narrative and incorporated into Agathias's. *μίμησις* for Agathias consisted in the search for points of style, words and phrases that would give his work the required appearance of Atticism. In the sense in which Agathias understood it history was essentially an artistic creation; he says that he wishes ταῖς Μούσαις . . . τὰς Χάριτας καταμιγνύναι (III. 1 p. 138. 5)<sup>35</sup> and hopes that his digressions possess τὸ θέλγον . . . ζῶν τῷ ὠφελίμῳ. And one of the first requirements of this type of rhetorical history was purity of language, an aim to be attained by the inclusion of phraseology sanctified by the usage of the ancients.<sup>36</sup> Our question will be how far Agathias really knew the works he thought it desirable to imitate.

<sup>33</sup> I. 6.

<sup>34</sup> It has been suggested, eg. by Bury, *Later Roman Empire* II. 275 n. 3, that Agathias derived his information about the Franks from an embassy of Sigibert in Constantinople in 566. But would the Franks themselves have represented the Burgundian expedition in which Clodomir was killed as a complete failure? Gregory of Tours did not (*Historia Franc.* III. 6).

<sup>35</sup> Cf. Norden, *Die Antike Kunstprosa* I. 92. Menander Protector factually follows Agathias (p. 2. 3 Dind.): Lucian on the other hand ridicules his idiosyncrasy (II. 14).

<sup>36</sup> H. Peter, *Die geschichtl. Lit. über die röm. Kaiserzeit* II. 188 f.



Some of the stylistic imitations adduced by Franke can be rejected out of hand, eg. III. 10 p. 158. 5 f. / Hdt. IX. 106, where the imitation depends solely upon the use of *συμμαχία*, *ἀπιστος* and *ἐμμένειν*. Franke has not observed that in saying *ἐς τὸ συμμαχικὸν ἐποίησαντο, πῶς τε καταλαβόντες καὶ ὁρκίοισι ἐμμένειν τε καὶ μὴ ἀποστήσασθαι* Herodotus is simply paraphrasing the language of treaties.<sup>37</sup> Agathias would not have needed a source to tell him what words to use in this context. Two rather different cases are IV. 17 p. 243. 7 / Hdt. VIII. 37 (*πέτραι ἀπερρωγυῖαι / ἀπορραγεῖσαι*) and I. 8 p. 53. 11 / Hdt. III. 146 (*αἱ τε πύλαι ἀνεπετάννυντο / δὺς κορυφαί*) and I. 8 p. 53. 11 / Hdt. III. 146 (*αἱ τε πύλαι ἀνεπετάννυντο / δὺς κορυφαί*); neither case is certain.<sup>38</sup> Similarly with I. 15 *ἀναπετάσας τὰς πύλας*; against this one example from *ἀπὸνῆτο, ἀλλ' ἐξελασθεὶς τιμᾶς . . . ἔχει*; against this one example from Herodotus compare the frequent occurrences of the word in Epic.<sup>39</sup> Different again is III. 22 p. 187. 13 / Hdt. VIII. 9 (*βουλόμενος ἀπόπειραν ποιήσασθαι / ἀπόπειραν αὐτῶν ποιήσασθαι βουλόμενος*), with which compare II. 14 p. 94. 10 / Hdt. VIII. 68 (*οὐ . . . ἀντέχειν . . . οἳ τε εἶναι / οὐ γὰρ οἳ τε εἶναι ἀντέχειν*), II. 19 p. 105. 9 / Hdt. VI. 84 (*εἴσω τοῦ Φάσιδος . . . ποταμοῦ . . . πείρας / παρὰ Φᾶσιν ποταμὸν πείραν*),<sup>40</sup> I. 4 p. 21. 9 / Hdt. VIII. 26 (*ἐνεργὸν τὸ βούλευμα / ἐνεργοὶ βουλόμενοι εἶναι* – a confusion by Franke of *βούλομαι* and *βουλεύω*), I. 2 p. 18. 17 / Hdt. II. 79 (*νόμοις χρώμενοι . . . πλείστα δὲ ὅσα ἐπικτησάμενοι / πατρίοις χρώμενοι νόμοις ἄλλ' οὐδένα ἐπικτεῖνται*).<sup>41</sup> If we are to believe that these are genuine imitations of the Herodotean passages in question, we have to suppose that Agathias made constant use of his text of Herodotus and looked it up on the most trifling matters, only to find in it the words which would probably have occurred to him anyway. But if this were really the case, it would be surprising not that Franke found so many examples of this kind, but that he found so few.

I find it equally impossible to accept III. 3 p. 143. 10 / Hdt. VIII. 22, where only the idea is similar. More than doubtful, too, is II. 21 p. 112. 9 / Hdt. VII. 36 (*ζεύξας τὰς . . . ὄχθας καὶ ὅλον γεφύραν τεκτῆνόμενος / τὰς*

<sup>37</sup> Cf. Meiggs-Andrews, *Sources for Greek History*, Oxford (1951) B 49, B 52, B 62, Thuc. V. 47. 8 etc. Agathias could hardly have avoided these words in the context – they were not avoided by Thuc. V. 18. 9 *ὁ ὄρκος ἔστω ὅδε· ἐμμένω ταῖς ξυνηθείαις . . .*, Ar. Lys. 1185 *ὄρκους . . . καὶ πῶς . . . ὅτε*. Agathias's usage only resembles that of Herodotus in the most general sense – nor does *ἀπιστος* represent the same idea as *πῶς*.

<sup>38</sup> *ἀπερρωγυῖαι* in any case seems to mean "steep" (cf. *ἀπορρώξ* Od. XIII. 98 etc., Hesych. *ἀπορρώξ* – *αἱ ἀνέχουσαι πέτραι*), whereas *ἀπορραγεῖσαι* in Herodotus clearly means "broken off". For *ἀναπετάννυντο* cf. Xen. Anab. VII. 1. 17, etc.; Agathias uses it twice more – I. 18 p. 53. 11 and I. 15 p. 46. 12.

<sup>39</sup> Od. XI. 324, XVI. 120, XVII. 293, XXIV. 30 (*τιμῆς ἀπὸνῆμενος*). H. van Herwerden, *Mnemosyne* 17 (1889) 16 f. collects Homeric vocabulary in Agathias. The phrase, or rather the verb, was in any case familiar – cf. Aristides XLVI. 167. 207, XLIV. 830. 384, Proc. BG IV. 32. 9, BP I. 18. 18 etc.

<sup>40</sup> How could Agathias have avoided naming the river beside which the action was taking place?

<sup>41</sup> *ἐπικτεῖνται* is the obvious word, and not particularly rare.

δὲ (sc. γεφύρας) ἄλλοι ἀρχιτέκτονες ἐξέκλυσαν) Agathias did not need Herodotus to tell him what words to use with *γέφυρα*.<sup>42</sup> Franke alleges that Agathias II. 21 p. 110. 18 is an imitation of Herodotus II. 6:

Ag. *ἐστὶ γὰρ ὁ  
παρασάγγης ὡς μὲν  
Ἡροδότῳ δοκεῖ καὶ  
Ξενοφῶντι τριάκοντα  
στάδια, ὡς δὲ νῦν Ἰβηρες καὶ  
Πέρσαι φασίν, ἐν ἐνὶ μόνῳ  
τῶν εἴκοσι πλείονα.*

Hdt. *δύναται δὲ ὁ μὲν  
παρασάγγης τριάκοντα  
στάδια*

But the very wording leads one to suppose not that it is an imitation of Herodotus but that, if it is an imitation at all, it is a direct copying from another source.<sup>43</sup> There is no more direct verbal reminiscence here than there is in eg. Strabo XI. 11. 5 *τὸν δὲ παρασάγγην τὸν Περσικὸν οἱ μὲν ἐξήκοντα σταδίων φασίν, οἱ δὲ τριάκοντα ἢ τεσσαράκοντα* or in Suidas's notice s. v. *παρασάγγης* – *εἶδος μέτρου Περσικοῦ, ὃ ἐστὶ λ' στάδια. Ξενοφῶν . . .* A further doubtful case is Agathias II. 21 p. 111. 4 / Hdt. I. 180 (*τὰς ὁδοὺς διαμετροῦνται / ἡ πόλις κατατέμνεται τὰς ὁδοὺς*). The word is sufficiently common not to guarantee a borrowing.<sup>44</sup>

I come now to cases which look more promising. Take for instance I. 21 p. 60. 3 / Hdt. III. 64 (*ἐς τοὺς ἵππους ἀναθρόντες / ἀναθρόσκοντι ἐπὶ τὸν ἵππον*). It might seem that Agathias simply wants another word for mounting (he has just used *ἐπιβαίνω* at p. 59. 21),<sup>45</sup> but *ἀναθρόσκω* is Herodotean (also at VII. 18 – not of horses).<sup>46</sup> But it is hardly a coincidence that Procopius also uses the expression *ἀναθρόσκειν ἐπὶ τὸν ἵππον* (BV II. 3. 20) and imitates the Herodotus passage in which it occurs no less than eight times.<sup>47</sup> Add to this II. 9 p. 84. 12 / Hdt. I. 189:

Ag. *οἱ δὲ τῇ διώξει  
ποταμὸν κατεφέροντο  
καὶ ὑποβρύχιοι γενόμενοι  
ἔθνησκον.*

Hdt. *ὁ ποταμὸς ὑποβρύχιον οἰχώκεε  
φέρων τὸν ἵππον.*

<sup>42</sup> *ζεύγνυμι* is of course the *vox propria*, and *τεκταίνω* obvious enough. Procopius again affords a closer parallel – though only one of many – BG IV. 28. 12 *γεφύρῃ τὸν ποταμὸν ζεύξας . . .*

<sup>43</sup> Cf. eg. the remarks of Peter, o. c. (n. 36) II. 253 f. on this practice.

<sup>44</sup> Eg. Arist. Pol. 1267<sup>b</sup> 23 *κατατέμνειν τὸν Πειραιᾶ* etc.

<sup>45</sup> It appears from Pollux I. 203 that *ἀναβαίνω* was the *vox propria*.

<sup>46</sup> Though cf. Ap. Rhod. III. 957, IV. 42, *ἀναθρόσκοντι* NA VI. 3 etc., *ἐπιβαίνω* p. 44. 15 etc. *ἀναθρόσκω* was also a favourite gloss – Hesychius and Suidas give it in *ἀναπηδῶ*, and Herodotus uses *ἀποθρόσκω* at I. 80, which was a favourite gloss in *ἀναθρόσκω* (Dionys. I. 416, II. 95, 164, 489, V. 535, VIII. 18 etc.).

<sup>47</sup> Braun, o. c. (n. 9) 28.



Though ὑποβρύχιος was by no means confined to Herodotus,<sup>48</sup> an imitation might be indicated by the proximity of ποταμός and κατεφέροντο,<sup>49</sup> as well as by the formation.<sup>50</sup> But the Herodotus passage appears in Suidas s. v. Συμφήσας; it may well have been singled out for comment in Agathias's day also.<sup>51</sup> Similar is II. 9 p. 84. 1 / Hdt. IX. 69:

Ag. ἐνέκιντο, ἔως  
τοὺς μὲν κατεστόρεσαν,  
οἱ δὲ ἐς τὰς τοῦ  
ποταμοῦ ἐξέπεσον δίνας

Hdt. ἐσπεσόντες δὲ  
κατεστόρεσαν αὐτῶν  
ἐξακοσίους.

The appearance of a πίπτειν compound in close conjunction with καταστρέφω in the context of battle, a Herodotean usage,<sup>52</sup> suggests a borrowing, as does the combination of words in III. 6 p. 150. 6/Hdt. I. 43:

Ag. καὶ ἀμφικυκλώσαντες  
τῷ πλήθει τὸν περίβολον  
πάντοθεν ἐσηκόντιζον.

Hdt. καὶ περιστάντες αὐτὸ  
κύκλω, ἐσηκόντιζον.

But in none of these four passages is there any point in the imitation beyond the use of one unusual word coupled with one or more other words which seem to show knowledge of the Herodotean context. And while the first set of "borrowings" considered was ruled out on the grounds that the words were commonplace, these last examples can easily be accounted for by the supposition that if Agathias did know the actual passages from Herodotus, it was only through the medium of lexicographers; other Atticists had used them before him and there was no shortage of Herodotean lexicographers.

The same holds for the case of Agathias V. 6 p. 290. 3 / Hdt. I. 31, where the Herodotean passage is the Cleobis and Biton story. Agathias is describing Anthemius of Tralles and his four distinguished brothers, and

<sup>48</sup> eg. h. Hom. 33. 12, Pl. Phaedr. 248 A, Ap. Rhod. II. 1215. But again Nonnus was particularly fond of the word – Dionys. I. 209, VII. 255, X. 136, 153, XX. 374 etc. I owe these references, and those in n. 46 above, to a complete list furnished by the kindness of Professor W. Peek.

<sup>49</sup> Although Theon, Progyrn., I. p. 178 Walz joins together ποταμός and ὑποβρύχιος in a context where imitation of Herodotus is out of the question.

<sup>50</sup> ὑποβρύχιος as against using ὑπόβρυχα – which at Hdt. VII. 130 Van Herwerden, Lex. Suppl. et Dial. s. v. ὑπόβρυχα styles "Homerice" (cf. Od. V. 319). But cf. Aristides XLII 783. 320, XLVIII 487. 614, Philostratus N. 221. 31.

<sup>51</sup> For all the citations of historians in Suidas derive either from the Constantinian Excerpta or from previous lexicographers (de Boor, Byz. Zeitschr. XXI [1912] 381 f., XXIII [1914–15] 1 f.).

<sup>52</sup> Cf. VIII. 53 (καταστρέφωμι). But it is not only Herodotean – cf. e.g. Eur. Her. Fur. 1000, Xen. Cyrop. III. 3. 64, Plut. Nic. IX. 2.

says καὶ μακαρίσαιμι ἂν ἐγώγε αὐτῶν τὴν μητέρα, οὕτω ποικίλης παιδείας ἀναπλέων γονὴν ἀποκνήσασαν while Herodotus's words are Ἀργεῖοι μὲν γὰρ περιστάντες ἐμακάριζον τῶν νεηνίων τὴν ῥώμην, αἱ δὲ Ἀργεῖαι τὴν μητέρα αὐτῶν, οἷον τέκνων ἐκύρην. Here it would be a nice touch to remind us of Cleobis and Biton<sup>53</sup> – and the point would be taken by Agathias's readers.<sup>54</sup> But the borrowing is no proof of erudition – the passage was probably current in excerpta long before the day of Constantine Porphyrogenitus, and it was a regular rhetorical topos (cf. Menander Rhetor in Rh. Gr. [Sp.] III. 414. 1).

In one case we can actually trace the real source. Franke adduces the example of Agathias III. 27 p. 199. 11 / Hdt. I. 80, where Herodotus tells of a clever trick of Cyrus's whereby the camels were converted from the status of pack animals to the role of cavalry and made to lead the van; when they scented the camels the enemy horse naturally turned tail and there was a general rout. But in Agathias's version, all that happens is that a Persian elephant (no camels here) is shot by one of the Byzantines and, maddened by the wound, turns upon its own side, trampling on the Persian horse. According to Franke and Braun,<sup>55</sup> Procopius imitated the Herodotus passage in two places – BV I. 8. 25 f. and II. 11. 17 f. In both these passages Procopius describes a stratagem by which a circular formation is adopted with camels in a ring round the outside and all others in the middle; this allows the archers within the circle to shoot at the enemy while the latter's horses are panicking at the scent of the camels. There is so little agreement between Agathias and the other two authors that we cannot say, with Franke, that he was imitating the Herodotus passage, even if Procopius was.<sup>56</sup> On the contrary, the passage in Agathias is to be explained by the fact that he is imitating another passage of Procopius – BG IV. 14. 32 f. Here Procopius describes exactly the same event as Agathias – no camels here either – and while we need not doubt that what Agathias relates did actually occur (for he even knows the name of the man who shot the elephant), it is clear that he had the passage of Procopius in mind from his use of ἀναχατίζειν (cf. Proc. IV. 14. 32).<sup>57</sup>

Of two other cases the first is doubtful, the second unexciting. The first is Agathias IV. 5 p. 216. 2 / Hdt. VIII. 111:

<sup>53</sup> Though the phrase was not confined to Herodotus – cf. Ar. Wasps 1275.

<sup>54</sup> The story was ubiquitous – eg. Polyb. XXII. 20, Hygin. 254, Cic. Tusc. I. 47, Plut. Sol. 27, Paus. II. 20. 3, Lucian, Char. 10; Clem. Alex., Strom. III. 16. 1 Stählin takes it from Herodotus. Choricus, Or. Fun. in Proc. 40 calls the mother τῆς λεπτῆς ἐκείνης.

<sup>55</sup> Franke, o. c. (n. 1) 14–15, Braun, o. c. (n. 9) 44–45.

<sup>56</sup> Which is denied by Haury, Zur Beurteilung des Geschichtsschreibers Procopius von Cäsarea, Progr. Wilhelms-Gymn. München (1896–97) 8.

<sup>57</sup> Stein, Bas-Empire II. 509 n. 1 (on elephants in the Persian army). The passages but without drawing my conclusion. Ammianus XXV. 1. 14–15 shows that there was always a real danger of the sort of thing Agathias describes.



Ag. τὸ μὲν γὰρ βασιλεῖον  
γράμμα παρακελεύεται  
τοῖς στρατηγοῖς στέλλειν . . .  
πειθοῖ μὲν τὸ πρῶτον  
ἀνηκουστοῦντα δὲ καὶ  
πρὸς ἀνάγκης.

Hdt. προεισχυόμενον

Θεμιστοκλέος λόγον τόνδε, ὡς  
ἤκουεν Ἀθηναῖοι περὶ ἐαυτοῦς  
ἔχοντες δύο θεοὺς μεγάλους,  
Πειθῶ τε καὶ Ἀναγκαλίην . . .

The suggestion that Agathias deliberately intended a reference to Themistokles's striking words gains some support from the surprising rarity of the combination,<sup>58</sup> though not, I should have thought, from the proximity of the alleged but implausible imitation at IV. 6 p. 216. 20 / Hdt. V. 24 (φιλον καὶ εὖνουν . . . προτεινομένων / φίλος συνετός τε καὶ εὖνους . . . προτεινομαι). But even though Themistokles was a regular rhetorical παράδειγμα<sup>59</sup> and Agathias may have been familiar with the saying since his schooldays, the words of Justinian's letter are exactly what we should have expected in any case, and in their context carry no especial weight. The second case is the Herodotean influence in Agathias's proem. As Franke points out, Agathias expands Herodotus's thought, but takes care to signal his imitation by placing the words μέγала τε καὶ ἀξιάγαστα ἔργα in the same position as Herodotus's ἔργα μέγала τε καὶ θαυμαστά. Agathias had a striking exemplar in Procopius, who, though beginning in Thucydidean style, actually uses the word ἐξίτηλα in his proem and imitates the Herodotean passage more than once elsewhere.<sup>60</sup> And the proem was of course in a class by itself for purposes of imitation.<sup>61</sup>

We are left with a collection of examples of varying degrees of probability, all of which, significantly, come from books VII, VIII and IX of Herodotus. When he describes Belisarius combating the Hun invasion with his small force Agathias explicitly draws the comparison with Leonidas and his Spartans at Thermopylae (V. 19 p. 319. 3 f.). At V. 19 p. 320. 20 Agathias uses the words σύν ἀλαλαγμῷ ἐπιφερόμενοι καὶ πατάγῳ and in the

<sup>58</sup> One would have expected it to be very common. Cf. πειθῶ and βία in Plut. Them. 21, Pl. Laws 722 B, and the word πειθανάγκη which proves that the two ideas were linked in popular thought.

<sup>59</sup> K. Alewell, Über das rhetorische παράδειγμα, Kieler Diss., Leipzig (1913). Cf. Eunapius (Dind. p. 209); τί γὰρ Σωκράτει πρὸς σφέων καὶ Θεμιστοκλεῖ πρὸς δεινότητά, Proc. Gaz., Paneg. 21 p. 510 Bonn, Proc. de Aed. I. 17. And see Nicolaus Soph., Rh. Gr. III. p. 487. 21 Sp.

<sup>60</sup> Braun, o. c. (n. 9) 5.

<sup>61</sup> Cf. H. Lieberich, Studien zu den Proömien in griech. u. byz. Geschichtschreibung II, Progr. München (1900). Like most Byzantine proems, Agathias's owes most to Diodorus, but Herodotus and Thucydides were more obvious sources – cf. Lucian, Hist. Conscr. 54. Porphyry wrote a work called εἰς τὸ Θουκυδίδου προοίμιον (Suidas s. v. Πορφύριος) and Herodotus's was as famous – Demetr. περὶ ἐρμηνείας, Rh. Gr. III. 264. 21 Sp. cf. 272. 13, Clem. Alex., Paed. II. 111. 1 ἐξίτηλος μὲν γὰρ ἡ γραφή τῷ χρόνῳ . . . See also A. Pertusi, L'atteggiamento spirituale della più antica storiografia bizantina, Aevum (1956) 134–66.

next line ὁ τε κονιορτός εἰς ὕψος αἰρόμενος; at V. 10 p. 321. 5 we have οἱ βάρβαροι ὄχοντο ξὺν ἀκοσμίᾳ. It is just possible that all these are drawn from Herodotus – VIII. 37 πολλῶ πατάγῳ . . . βαῆ τε καὶ ἀλαλαγμός ἐγένετο,<sup>62</sup> VIII. 65 κονιορτὸν χωρέοντα<sup>63</sup> and VII. 220 ἀκόσμως οἴχεσθαι of the Greeks dismissed by Leonidas; individually they are not very probable, but together they might be possible. Franke adduces also II. 20 p. 108. 14 / Hdt. VII. 176:

Ag. ἔστι δὲ οὐδὲν ὅτι οὖν ἄλλο ἐν-  
ταῦθα, ἢ μόνον χυτρώων πο-  
λητήρια, ὡς καὶ τὴν προσηγο-  
ρίαν ἐντεῦθεν τῷ χώρῳ ἐβλήθη-  
ται. Ὀλλάρια γὰρ, ὡς ἂν Λα-  
τῖνός τις φήσῃ ἐπωνόμασται.  
δύναται δὲ τοῦτο τῇ Ἑλλήνων  
φωνῇ Χυτροπώλια.

Hdt. ἔστι δὲ ἐν τῇ ἐσόδῳ ταύτῃ  
θερμὰ λαυτρά, τὰ Χύτρους κα-  
λέουσι οἱ ἐπιχώριοι.

which he holds to be confirmed by II. 20 p. 108. 19 / Hdt. VII. 175:

Ag. ἐβουλεύοντο ἅπαντες . . . ἐνταῦ-  
θα τοὺς δυσμενεῖς ἐκδεξάμενοι  
στήσεσθαι τε ἐς παράταξιν καὶ  
διακωλύειν αὐτοὺς ἀνὰ τὰ πρό-  
σω ἴοντας.

Hdt. ταύτην ὧν ἐβουλεύσαντο φυλάσ-  
σοντες τὴν ἐσβολὴν μὴ παριέναι  
ἐς τὴν Ἑλλάδα τὸν βάρβαρον.

III. 24 p. 194. 16 / Hdt. VII. 226 looks more convincing:

Ag. πλείονι τε ἢ πρότερον τοξεῖα  
ἐχρῶντο, ὡς οὕτω δὴ καὶ μᾶλλον  
τοὺς Ῥωμαίους ἐκπλήξοντες,  
καὶ τάχιστα τὴν πόλιν ἀρπασό-  
μενοι.

Hdt. ὡς ἐπεὶ οἱ βάρβαροι ἀπίωσι  
τὰ τοξεύματα τὸν ἥλιον ὑπὸ  
τοῦ πλήθους τῶν ὀϊστῶν ἀπο-  
κρύπτουσι· τοσοῦτο πλήθος  
αὐτῶν εἶναι· τὸν δὲ οὐκ  
ἐκπλαγέντα ταῦτοισι . . .

τοιγάρτοι βέλη ἐφέρετο ἅμα  
συχνά, καὶ εἰτα ἕτερα καὶ ἄλλα  
ἐπὶ ταῦτοις· ἅπαντά τε τὸν με-  
ταξὺ ἀέρα ἐπεκάλυπτον τῇ συν-  
εχείᾳ, ὥσπερ ἀλλήλοις ξυμπε-  
φυκότα. εἶκασεν ἂν τις τὸ χρῆμα  
νιφετῷ μεγάλῳ ἢ χαλάζῃ πολλῇ  
ξὺν βιαίῳ πνεύματι καταρραγεῖσθαι.

<sup>62</sup> Though πατάγος and ἀλαλαγμός are favourite glosses, – besides being specially recommended words for use in battle pieces – τ. Α. Ion. περὶ τῶν τελείων λόγων (V. 1. 1. 580). And Procopius twice imitates Hdt. II. 7. 5, VII. 21. 13 (βόη καὶ πατάγος) (BV I. 13. 7, II. 3. 14).

<sup>63</sup> κονιορτός is not Homeric, though the idea is (II. XXI. 503, XVI. 775, XIII. 335, XII. 254). And Hdt.'s passage is very similar in sense.



But the idea was commonplace – cf. Procopius BP I. 14. 35 τὰ μὲν οὖν πρῶτα τοξεύμασιν ἐχρῶντο ἐς ἀλλήλους ἐκότεροι, καὶ τινὰ τὰ βέλη τῶ πληθὺ ἀχλὺν ἐπὶ πλείστον ἐποίει, ἐκ τε ἀμφοτέρων πολλοὶ ἐπιπτον, πολλῶν δὲ συχνότερα τὰ τῶν βαρβάρων βέλη ἐφέρετο, to which the passage of Agathias is more similar than it is to Herodotus; and Theophylact, after Agathias, presents us with the same picture (III. 14. 6). Lucian, indeed, advises the use of this very τόπος (Rhet. Praec. 19). Plataea affords further possibilities, eg. II. 7 p. 79 / Hdt. IX. 57, where Franke suspects, perhaps rightly, that Agathias derived subject matter from Herodotus. The story is essentially the same in each, and in parallel places we find in Agathias ἀναμένειν and ἐπορεύοντο βάδην, in Herodotus ἦγε βάδην and ἀνέμενε. In the same book (II. 17 p. 243. 17) Agathias seems to have before him Herodotus IX. 49; there is sufficient similarity of subject matter – a general is pleased by news and makes an attack on some men guarding a spring – and within the space of 15 lines in Agathias and 10 in Herodotus we find the words ὑδρεύονται / ὑδρεύετο, ἐτετάχατο / τεταγμένοι and ἦσθη / περιχαρής. From Herodotus IX. 62 comes III. 7 p. 152. 13 (ὠθίζοντο ἀλλήλους καὶ ἀντὶθύνον... ἐν τῷ τότε πανωλεθρίᾳ διεφθάρησαν / ἀπίκοντο ἐς ὠθισμόν... ἐσέπιπτον ἐς τοὺς Σπαρτιήτας καὶ διεφθείροντο,<sup>64</sup> and from IX. 72, I. 15 p. 45. 11, using the word δυσθανάτω.<sup>65</sup> There remains only Agathias II. 12 p. 90. 13 / Hdt. VIII. 57 (ἀπολώλασι τοιγαροῦν ἅπαντες τῇ σφῶν αὐτῶν ἀβουλίᾳ μᾶλλον ἢ τοῖς ἡμῶν ὕπλοις / ἀπολέταί τε ἡ Ἑλλάς ἀβουλίᾳσι) but cf. Sophocles, Electra 389, 429 (with πεσεῖν).

From this long examination it looks as though the results are clear. Agathias, the "learned" historian,<sup>66</sup> whose aim it was to imitate the classics, confined his imitation of Herodotus to the battles of Thermopylae and Plataea – and what more likely than that he read these passages in some collection<sup>67</sup> – and to the hackneyed quotations that appeared in lexica and handbooks. And above all, there is a suspicious number of cases where he may have looked no further than to the works of Procopius. I shall return to this point later.

In the meantime we must go on to Agathias's borrowings from Thucydides. The picture is that of a writer who knew parts of Thucydides well, but only very limited parts. The imitations are, for the most part, obvious; unlike that of Herodotus, Thucydides's subject matter as well as style

was the bread and butter of later historians. But Agathias's range seems to extend only to Perikles's funeral speech (Ag. III. 9 p. 156. 19 / Thuc. II. 36), the Mytilene debate (III. 9 p. 156. 3 / Thuc. III. 39. 5; IV. 7 p. 219. 16 f. / Thuc. III. 44. 1), the speech of the Theban legates (IV. 6 p. 218. 20 / Thuc. III. 64. 4), the speech of the Corcyreans (IV. 8 p. 222. 21 / Thuc. I. 34. 3; III. 10 p. 160. 10 / Thuc. I. 32. 2), Demosthenes's Ambracian campaign (IV. 16 p. 241. 8 f. / Thuc. III. 112. 5–113. 6), and, above all, the siege of Plataea (Agathias's whole account of the siege of Onoguris, III. 5 p. 147 f.).<sup>68</sup> Out of eight shorter imitations collected by Franke,<sup>69</sup> seven, excluding Ag. I. 1 p. 15. 2 / Thuc. III. 82. 2 (μένειν δὲ εἰς αἶψα καὶ ἀκμάζειν ἔστ' ἂν ἡ αὐτὴ φύσις ἀνθρώπων ᾗ / γιγνόμενα μὲν καὶ αἰεὶ ἐσόμενα, ἕως ἂν ἡ αὐτὴ φύσις τῶν ἀνθρώπων ᾗ), which was surely a famous phrase, come from Book I of Thucydides.

It is very instructive to compare Agathias with Procopius, who imitates Thucydides much more extensively.<sup>70</sup> A similar pattern can be seen; nearly half of Procopius's imitations are from Book I, the rest largely from the first four books. He too imitates the funeral speech, the Corinth-Corcyra debate and the siege of Plataea.<sup>71</sup> Of other passages imitated by Agathias Procopius imitates also I. 6. 3. (Thuc.: ἀναιμένη τῇ διαίτῃ εἰς τὸ τρυφώτερον μετέστησαν / Proc. BG III. 32. 23 ἀναιμένη... διαίτῃ χαίρων / Ag. II. 11 p. 88. 18 ἐς τὸ τρυφώτερον τῆς διαίτης... μεταβεβλήσθαι; cf. also Thuc. I. 6. 3. χρυσῶν τεττίγων ἐνέρσει κρωβύλον ἀναδούμενοι τῶν ἐν τῇ κεφαλῇ τρίχων / Proc. BG II. 23. 36–37, BP I. 17. 27 / Ag. I. 3 p. 20. 4 καὶ ἐνέρσει... ἀναπεπλεγμένοι, also Theophylact, Hist. Dial. 10 τὸν δὲ κρωβύλον... τεττίξ δ' ἄρα αὐτῷ χρύσεός...), I. 130. 1 (Thuc.: οὐκέτι ἐδύνατο ἐν τῷ καθεστῶτι τρόπῳ βιοτεύειν / Proc. BV I. 9. 8 οὐκ ἐδύνατο... etc., BG II. 18. 10... οὔτε μένειν ἐν τοῖς καθεστῶσιν ἐδύνατο etc.<sup>72</sup> / Ag. I. 7 p. 30. 3 οἷω οὐκ ἔτι ἐν τῷ καθεστῶτι τρόπῳ βιοτεύειν), II. 84. 3 (Thuc.: τοῖς κόντοις διεωθοῦντο / Proc. BV I. 13. 7 τοῖς κόντοις διωθόμενοι etc.<sup>73</sup> / Ag. II. 9 p. 84. 10 τοῖς κόντοις διωθόμενοι), IV. 33. 2 (Thuc.: κούφως τε ἐσκευασμένοι / Proc. BG I. 25. 9 κούφως ἐσκευασμένοι / Ag. III. 28 p. 203. 14 κούφως αἰεὶ ἐσταλμένοι) and V. 99. 1 (Thuc.: ἐς προὔπτον κίνδυνον / Proc. BP II. 6. 3 ἐς κίνδυνόν τινα προὔπτον, BV II. 25 etc.<sup>74</sup> / Ag. III. 20 p. 184. 4 προὔπτου κινδύνου). It is obvious that Procopius must have been the intermediary for many, and perhaps for all, of these imitations.

<sup>64</sup> Though here too cf. Proc. – BG III. 5. 11, 22. 5.

<sup>65</sup> Cf. III. 22 p. 189. 3. Franke cites Pollux, and might have added that the lines from Hdt. are cited in Suidas s. v. σφαγιάζειν. Their position in the account of Plataea, which Agathias seems to have known, suggests that he did get the word from Hdt., but we may feel doubtful as to the means.

<sup>66</sup> The view of Iorga, Médaillons d'histoire littéraire byzantine, Byzantion 2 (1925) 242, and Krumbacher, Gesch. der Byz. Lit.<sup>2</sup>, München (1897) 241.

<sup>67</sup> Battle pieces counted as τόποι (cf. Lucian, Hist. Conscr. 45). Dio Cassius (XXXVIII. 49. 3 and XXXVIII. 49. 6) imitated both Thermopylae and Plataea (Peter, o. c. [n. 36] II. 312).

<sup>68</sup> Franke, o. c. (n. 1) 24 f.

<sup>69</sup> 31 f.

<sup>70</sup> Cf. H. Braun, Procopius Caesariensis quatenus imitatus sit Thucydidem, Diss. Erlangen (1885) (= Acta Seminarii Erlangensis 4 [1886] 161–221). There are far more Thucydidean (and Herodotean) "formulae" in Procopius than in Agathias.

<sup>71</sup> Braun, o. c. (n. 70) 25, 28 and 47 f.

<sup>72</sup> Braun, o. c. (n. 70) 14. Cf. also Choricus p. 35 Boiss.

<sup>73</sup> Braun, o. c. (n. 70) 45.

<sup>74</sup> Braun, o. c. (n. 70) 36.



But although Braun says of the siege of Plataea<sup>75</sup> "descriptionem . . . fere totam invenimus apud Procopium", Agathias could have taken the idea of imitating it not only from his immediate predecessor but from a score of earlier writers. Imitated for example by Arrian,<sup>76</sup> Josephus,<sup>77</sup> Dio Cassius,<sup>78</sup> Dexippus<sup>79</sup> and Priscus,<sup>80</sup> it was not only an obvious *topos* but may even have been regarded as one by Thucydides himself.<sup>81</sup> The very phrase used by Agathias at III. 5 p. 147. 18 (δέρρεις καὶ διφθέρας – cf. Thuc. II. 75. 5) is imitated also by Arrian (II. 18) and Priscus (fr. I b). Such was the esteem in which Thucydides's account was held that Dexippus, Priscus<sup>82</sup> and Procopius<sup>83</sup> have been accused of copying it at the expense of the facts.

So Agathias's Thucydides imitations so far follow a very conventional pattern. And we can see from their placing within his work how selective he was. The reminiscences of the siege of Plataea are naturally placed within the description of the siege of Onoguris; but the most striking instance is IV. 6 p. 216 f., where Agathias sets out the pleas for prosecution and defence in the trial of Rusticus and Joannes – it is here that he imitates the Mytilene debate, the Corinth-Corcyra debate and the speech of the Theban legates. Agathias evidently regarded this episode as a set-piece and worked it up as such – speeches were in any case the obvious place for imitation of Thucydides (cf. Ag. III. 9 p. 155 f.,<sup>84</sup> and for Procopius, Braun, o. c. [n. 70] p. 22). It is then a little surprising that he does not seem to have used Thucydides for his account of the plague which carried off Leutharis and many of his men (II. 3 p. 69–70) in spite of the tradition of imitators of Thucydides.<sup>85</sup> Plagues were certainly regarded as splendid opportunities for display – compare eg. the words of Dion. Hal. *περὶ τῶν ἐν μελέταις πλημμελουμένων* X. 17: *τὰς καλουμένας ἐκφράσεις*,

<sup>75</sup> o. c. (n. 70) 47.

<sup>76</sup> Anab. II. 18, 21, 23, 27.

<sup>77</sup> Ant. IV. 55.

<sup>78</sup> LXVI. 4. 2. In the same book Dio shows us just how famous – or hackneyed – Thucydides's great battles were: he describes (LXVI. 25) a display at the games when two teams were called on one occasion Corinthians and Corcyreans, on another Athenians and Syracusans, and reenacted the two naval battles. Photius, Bibl. (Bekker) 71 tells us that for Dio Thucydides was *ὁ κανὼν*.

<sup>79</sup> Fr. 27.

<sup>80</sup> Cf. E. A. Thompson, *Classical Quarterly* 39 (1945) 92–94.

<sup>81</sup> Cf. the remark of Syme, *Histoire et historiens dans l'antiquité*, *Entretiens sur l'antiquité classique* (Fondation Hardt) 4 (1956) 73: "Do you think that Thucydides treats Plataea as the type and model for the siege of a Greek city?"

<sup>82</sup> Thompson, o. c. (n. 80).

<sup>83</sup> Braun, o. c. (n. 70) 49. Haury, o. c. (n. 56) 4 f. combats some of Braun's arguments. But it remains true that Procopius took over much Thucydidean language, and the coincidence of fact is sometimes surprising.

<sup>84</sup> Franke o. c. (n. 1) 24–25.

<sup>85</sup> Eg. Lucretius VI. 1138–1286, Procopius BP II 22–23. (though on Procopius cf. G. Soyter, *Die Glaubwürdigkeit des Geschichtsschreibers Prokopios von Kaisareia*, B. Z. 44 [1951] 541 f.).

πολλαχού χειμῶνα γράφειν καὶ λοιμούς καὶ λιμούς καὶ παρατάξεις καὶ ἀριστείας. But Agathias's is not a very long account, and he devotes most of it to a description of Leutharis's madness; he seems to have overlooked, or rejected, the chance of imitation.

But in general, the scope of Agathias's borrowings from both writers is clear. The Herodotus ones are fewer than has been supposed, and at that usually from famous or hackneyed passages, or else cribbed from Procopius; the Thucydides ones are confined to the obvious and the familiar. We might have expected from one who knew Herodotus a mention of his name alongside *ὁ πρότερον ποιηταί* as a predecessor of Nonnus and *ὁ νέοι* in telling the story of the flaying of Marsyas; for Agathias goes to great pains to refute the idea<sup>86</sup> that the Persian punishment of flaying originated before Sapor I and treats the whole matter at some length (IV. 23 p. 256 f.).<sup>87</sup> A reference too to the unpleasant story of the man whose skin was cut into strips and woven into a chair might well have been expected.<sup>88</sup>

The borrowings take a simple form. Where it is not just a matter of vocabulary,<sup>89</sup> it is a search for *flosculi*. Agathias does not draw on his models for subject matter, except in the preface<sup>90</sup> and for a few incidents in battle pieces. Where he could have used Herodotus with advantage he turns unhesitatingly to the Ctesias tradition; Agathias had no more the idea of going back to the best source than had most of his contemporaries,<sup>91</sup> for where he does boast of having better sources than anyone else – namely on the Sassanids<sup>92</sup> – his narrative is simply a version of the *Autopsiebericht*, which had a separate tradition of its own.<sup>93</sup> It was enough for Agathias if he could introduce phrases from famous authors – the more the better. He gives no indication of having a close acquaintance with the

<sup>86</sup> Wrongly, for the punishment of flaying appears in Assyrian sculptures and documents (cf. Olmstead, *Hist. of Assyria*, New York [1923]) and was practised under the Achaemenids (Hdt. V. 25, Plut. Artax. 17). In Sassanid days Theodoret, Adv. Haer. I. 26 and Cyrill., Catech. VI. 30 called it "the Persian punishment".

<sup>87</sup> Cf. Hdt. VII. 126. Alexander Polyhistor, whose work Jacoby thought Agathias had before him at II. 24 f., also told the story of Marsyas, though admittedly not in the *Χαλδικά* (Plut. de Fluviiis X. 1). So did Xenophon, Anab. I. 2. 8, among others.

<sup>88</sup> Hdt. V. 25 – not the only case of its kind (cf. Diod. XV. 10, though Ammian dismisses this version as a fable – XXIII. 6. 82).

<sup>89</sup> Agathias's Thucydidean vocabulary and mannerisms – Franke, o. c. (n. 1) 41 f. Most of the Herodotean "imitations" are in fact reducible to the use of Herodotean vocabulary, which did not of course mean that Agathias had to go back to his text of Herodotus. Cf. H. Kallenberg, *Berliner Philol. Wochenschr.* 35 (1915) 387 f. There were other ways of discovering which words to use in history-writing – Dionys. Hal. *περὶ λόγων ἐξετάσεως* X.

<sup>90</sup> Where he chiefly imitates Diodorus – Lieberich, o. c. (n. 61) 8 f.

<sup>91</sup> Cf. H. Peter, *Wahrheit u. Kunst, Geschichtsschreibung u. Plagiat*, *Klass. u. Altertum*, Leipzig-Berlin (1911) 426 f., o. c. (n. 36) II. 255 f.

<sup>92</sup> IV. 30 p. 274.

<sup>93</sup> Cf. eg. C. P. T. Naudé, *Ammianus Marcellinus in die Lig van die antieke Geschiedskrywing*, Diss. Leiden (1956) 41.



works of either author, and was, it seems, perfectly contented to take over the phrases he borrowed from handbooks or from the works of Procopius, whom he so admired.<sup>84</sup> And the interesting fact is that his attitude evidently met with general approval. We tend to agree with Gibbon and rate Procopius higher than Agathias; but it ought to be remembered that both were writing in an age when the first aim was to equal the historians of the past, and when this aim was thought to be best achieved by adopting a sort of hybrid "Attic" style crammed with imitations of the ancients. While modern readers tend to regard this as an unfortunate defect in Procopius, and admire him from quite different reasons, Byzantine audiences prized it, and, insofar as Agathias succeeded, which indeed was not so far as Procopius, they admired and copied his work.<sup>85</sup>

I have dealt here only with Herodotus, and Thucydides, whom Agathias imitated more extensively than other authors.<sup>86</sup> Let us give the last credit to our author however; in his preface he speaks of history making men immortal (p. 5. 5) οὐχ οἷα τὰ Ζαμόλξιδος νόμιμα καὶ ἡ Γετικὴ παραφροσύνη. Dare we say that this is not a derogatory reference to contemporary Gothic historiography<sup>87</sup> but a clever finishing touch put to Agathias's imitation of Diodorus<sup>88</sup> by an imitation of Herodotus IV. 93-94? Here at least there is point and interest in the imitation.<sup>89</sup>

<sup>84</sup> IV. 26 p. 264. 19 f.

<sup>85</sup> Cf. M. Apostolopulos, *Μένωνδρος Προτέτωρ μιμητὴς Ἀγαθίου*, Diss. Athen. (1894), and the imitations of Agathias in Leo Diaconus collected by Hase.

<sup>86</sup> Eg. Diodorus (preface), Lucian (preface) and Polybius (Franke, o. c. [n. 1] 49 f.).

<sup>87</sup> P. Lamma, *Ricerche sulla storia e la cultura del VI secolo*, Brescia (1950) 14 f.

<sup>88</sup> Lieberich, o. c. (n. 61) 8. Ag. p. 5. 5 τῆς ἱστορίας αὐτοῦ ἀπαθανατιζούσης Diod. I. 2. 5 τίς ἀρετὰς αὐτῶν τῆς ἱστορίας and Ag. p. 5. 6 ὡς ἀληθῶς τρόπῳ τινι θείῳ τε καὶ ἀθηνάϊῳ ἀπαθανατιζούσης Diod. I. 2. 3 διαβροόμεναι τῷ θειοτάτῳ τῆς ἱστορίας στόματι.

<sup>89</sup> Though even here one might reasonably have one's doubts. The story of Zamolxis was well known to all who knew about Pythagoras – Porph., Vit. Pythag. 14, Iambl., Vit. Pythag. 173, Strabo VII. 3. 5. 297, Diog. Laert. VIII. 1, Clem. Alex., Strom. IV. 57. 2 Stählin. And were it not that at the beginning of the sentence Diodorus refers to Zoroaster under the name, unknown to Agathias, of Ζαθράστην, we might well wonder whether Agathias was not in fact imitating Diodorus I. 94. 2 παρὰ δὲ τοῖς ὀνομαζομένοις Γέταις τοῖς ἀπαθανατιζούσι Ζαμόλμοξιν. . . But perhaps we can keep the Herodotus imitation after all.



# CHRISTIANITY AND TRADITION IN THE HISTORIOGRAPHY OF THE LATE EMPIRE

THAT Ammianus Marcellinus was a pagan is agreed on all sides.<sup>1</sup> He was no Eunapius to vilify and slander the Christians, and no Macrobius to pretend that they did not exist; nevertheless, while not (at any rate overtly) hostile to the new religion,<sup>2</sup> he still adhered to the old. It is, however, customary to quote as an illustration of his attitude to Christianity the numerous passages where he refers to things Christian in a curiously roundabout fashion, as if unfamiliar with the words he was using.<sup>3</sup> Instances such as 'Christiani ritus presbyter (ut ipsi appellant)' (31. 12. 8), 'coetus in unum quaesitus eiusdem legis cultorum (synodus ut appellant)' (15. 7. 7), 'inductus est (ut appellant Christiani) diaconus' (14. 9. 7), would seem at first sight to justify the conclusion of P. de Jonge that 'Ammianus speaks of Christianity as an alien religion which is not professed by him'.<sup>4</sup> And T. R. Glover's statement that 'as an outsider . . . who will have other outsiders among his readers, he will often half apologise for a technical term',<sup>5</sup> seems equally obvious and unexceptionable. L. R. Palmer goes so far as to deduce from Ammianus' use of these 'ut appellant' phrases that 'while he knows Christian expressions, few, if any, of them, belong to his normal vocabulary'.<sup>6</sup>

A comparison, however, with the usage of certain other late representatives of the ancient historiographical tradition<sup>7</sup> will show, we maintain, that 'lack of familiarity' with Christianity and Christian terms is not the whole explanation of these circumlocutions and apologies, if indeed it is an explanation at all. Compare, for instance, with the passages just cited from Ammianus, fr. 18 of Malchus of Philadelphia (*H.G.M.* i. 414. 2) *ιερέα, ὃν οἱ Χριστιανοὶ καλοῦσι*

<sup>1</sup> Cf. W. Enslin, *Die Geschichtsschreibung und Weltanschauung des Ammianus Marcellinus* (Klio, Beiheft xvi [1923], 91 f.), and E. A. Thompson, *The Historical Work of Ammianus Marcellinus* (1947), pp. 111 f. See also G. B. Pighi, *Reall. f. Antike u. Christentum* i (1950), 386 f., for a useful collection of all the passages in Ammianus relating to Christianity. We are grateful to Professor A. D. Momigliano for reading an earlier draft of this paper, which was read in a slightly different form before the Glasgow University Alexandrian Society on 28 November 1963.

<sup>2</sup> Gibbon's warm praise of Ammianus' impartiality in this respect evoked from one contemporary critic the observation that 'Mr. Gibbon shews, it is true, so strong a dislike to Christianity as visibly disqualifies him from that society of which he has created Ammianus Marcellinus president' (Porson, *Letters to Travers* [1790], pref. xxviii). See also below p. 322.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Enslin, *op. cit.* (n. 1), p. 96: 'wo er vom Christentum und von Christen erzählen mußte, tut er das in einer Form, die deutlich macht, daß er es als etwas ihm fremdes

betrachtet wissen will, dies besonders in der Art, wie er Fachausdrücke anführt.'

<sup>4</sup> *Phil. and Hist. Commentary on Ammianus Marcellinus*, 15. 6-13 (1953), p. 22: though he does add that the tendency 'to avoid technical expressions (as does Tacitus) for stylistic reasons, plays a part'. It will be seen that we go much farther than this: see below.

<sup>5</sup> *Life and Letters in the Fourth Century* (1901), pp. 40 f. Cf. also P. de Labriolle, *La réaction païenne* (1934), p. 436: 'Remarquable est la gaucherie, la vague dont il se sert dès qu'il en parle; on dirait qu'il ignore les termes techniques . . .'

<sup>6</sup> *The Latin Language* (1954), p. 205, in a discussion of the spread of 'Christian Latin'—on which see below, p. 323.

<sup>7</sup> That is to say writers of history in the manner of the 'classical' historians, Herodotus, Thucydides, Sallust, Tacitus—to be sharply distinguished from writers of epitomes, chronicles, and ecclesiastical histories, who all had different aims and different techniques: see the discussion of A. D. Momigliano, in *The Conflict between Paganism and Christianity in the Fourth Century*, edited by A. D. Momigliano (1963), pp. 79-99.

προσβύτερον and Procopius *Bella* 4. 21. 21: τὰ Χριστιανῶν λόγια ἔφασαν, ἅπερ καλεῖν εὐαγγέλια νενομίκασιν and *Anecd.* 11. 14: Χριστιανῶν δόξαι ἀπόβλητοι . . . ὥστε αἰρέσεις καλεῖν νενομίκασιν. One's first impression is that Malchus and Procopius were also unfamiliar with the words they were using, and wrote of Christianity as 'an alien religion which was not professed by them'. Yet Procopius was writing for an audience nurtured in what we are accustomed to think of as the overpoweringly Christian atmosphere of Constantinople in the age of Justinian, an age in which the Emperor dabbled in theology and when a conversation struck up at the greengrocer's would be as likely to turn on the relationship of the Son to the Father as on the chances of the favourite charioteer in tomorrow's race.<sup>1</sup> The parallelisms between Ammianus and the Byzantine historians are quite striking: Ammianus describes a Christian church rather obliquely as 'conventiculum ritus Christiani' (15. 5. 31). Zosimus, in the late fifth century, paraphrasing the history of Ammianus' contemporary Eunapius of Sardis, writes *παρὰ Χριστιανῶν τιμώμενον οἰκοδόμημα, νομιζόμενον ἄσυλον* (4. 40. 5). Agathias, a lawyer from Myrina who wrote a continuation of Procopius, calls a church *τινα νεῶν τῶν παρὰ Χριστιανοῖς σεμνοτάτων* (3. 24, p. 194. 6 Bonn), and Hagia Sophia itself merely *ὁ μέγιστος τοῦ θεοῦ νεῶς* (5. 9, p. 295. 8), as also did Theophylact Simocatta, writing fifty years after Agathias: *τὸ τοῦ θεοῦ μέγιστον ἀνὰ τὴν πόλιν . . . τέμενος* (6. 8. 8). Procopius refers to Hagia Sophia in a most extraordinary fashion: *τὸ ἱερόν Χριστοῦ τοῦ μεγάλου θεοῦ* (a definition lacking somewhat in theological rigour)—*Σοφίαν καλοῦσιν οἱ Βυζάντιοι τὸν νεῶν, ταύτην δὲ μάλιστα τῷ θεῷ πρέπειν τὴν ἐπωνυμίαν ἡγουμένοι* (3. 6. 26, cf. *Aed.* 1. 1. 21—virtually the same words). For a sixth-century Byzantine this is little short of ridiculous; Procopius writes just as if he were Herodotus describing the customs of the Scythians or Egyptians—which is, of course, precisely the impression he had intended to give. His description of religious practice at Rome is exactly like that of Herodotus for Sicily; compare Proc. 5. 25. 23, *τὸ Χριστιανῶν δόγμα εἶπερ τινες ἄλλοι Ῥωμαῖοι ἐτίμησαν* with Herod. 5. 67. 4, *οἱ δὲ Σικυώνιοι ἐώθεσαν μεγαλωσθὶ κάρτα τιμᾶν τὸν Ἀδρηστον*. Descriptions of festivals are equally illustrative:

Herodotus: *ἡμέρην δ' ἀπασέων μάλιστα ἐκείνην τιμᾶν νομίζουσιν* (the Persians) *τῇ ἑκάστοις ἐγένετο* (1. 133. 1).

Ammianus: *'feriarum die quem celebrantes mense Ianuario Christiani Epiphania dictitant'* (21. 2. 5).

Procopius: *ἐορτὴ ἡ Πασχαλία . . . ἣν δὲ σέβονται Χριστιανοὶ πασῶν μάλιστα* (1. 18. 15, cf. 4. 14. 7).

Theophylact Simocatta: *ἦν γὰρ ἡ ἡμέρα προσδόκιμος καθ' ἣν εἰθιστο ἐορτάζειν Ῥωμαῖοις τὸ σωτήριον ἐκεῖνο πάθος δι' οὗ τὸν κοσμὸν εἰσέποιήσατο ὁ μονογενὴς παῖς τοῦ θεοῦ . . . οὗτος δὲ ἐστὶν ὁ Χριστός* (3. 1. 4). After a monstrous circumlocution just to avoid the word for 'Easter' Simocatta apparently feels it necessary to gloss *μονογενὴς παῖς τοῦ θεοῦ* by *Χριστός*!

The other technical terms of Christianity suffer the same fate. Ammianus refers to nuns as *'virgines Christiano cultui divino sacratas'* (18. 10. 4), while Procopius says of monks: *τῶν Χριστιανῶν οἱ σωφρονέστατοι* . . . ὥστε καλεῖν

<sup>1</sup> See the famous passage in Gregory of Nyssa's *Oratio de vitale Filii et Spiritus Sancti*, P.G. xlv col. 557, corroborated for the sixth century by Agathias, 2. 29.

<sup>2</sup> *σωφρονέστατοι* is surely not, as Rubin

maintains (*J.E.* xxiii. 1. 32), ironic. The word *σωφρονέστατοι* is used in its normal meaning of 'temperate', 'chaste' (L.S.J., s.v. *σωφρονέστατος*). Theophylact, loc. cit., talks of the monks' *σωφρονέστατοι*.



μοναχοὺς νενομίκασι (1. 7. 22, cf. 4. 26. 17). Cf. Simocatta: φροντιστήριον ἀνδρῶν φιλοσόφων τὸν βίον μοναχοὶ δ' ἄρα οὗτοι κατονομάζονται, οἷς ἔργον . . . σώφρονι μαίᾳ τινὶ μεταφοικτῶν πρὸς τὰ κρείττονα (1. 14. 8). Cf. also Zosimus: τῶν λεγομένων μοναχῶν οὗτοι δὲ γάμοις τοῖς κατὰ νόμον ἀπαγορεύουσι . . . (5. 23. 4). But Agathias outdoes them all: ἐνταὶ δὲ καὶ ἀπειρηκυῖαι ἤδη ἐκ παίδων γάμοις τε καὶ φιλοκοσμῇ καὶ ταύτῃ δὴ τῇ περὶ τὸν βίον ἀναστροφῇ καὶ ὁμιλίᾳ, ἐν ἀποκεκριμένῳ τινὶ καὶ τῇ πρὸς τὸ θεῖον ἱκετεῖᾳ προσήκοντι ὑπεκρύπτοντο δωματίῳ, τὸ ἀμυγῆς τε καὶ ἐλευθέρον καὶ παντάπασιν ἀκοινώνητον τῆς μετ' ἀνδρῶν συνουσίας περὶ πλείστον ποιούμεναι καὶ μόνῳ τῷ ἡρεμῇ ἀνεμῆναι . . . (5. 13, p. 304. 4 f.). This extraordinary periphrasis comes in the midst of an exciting account of the fate of those who lived outside Constantinople when the Huns penetrated to its very gates in 559. Not only does Agathias lose control of his narrative in his archaizing zeal, but of his sentence too, and all to avoid the *vox propria*. It would be impossible to tell from these passages alone that Procopius, Agathias, and Simocatta were Christians,<sup>1</sup> while Ammianus and Zosimus were pagans. All five were perfectly familiar with the word *μοναχός* and knew, moreover, that their readers did not really need an explanation of the term. It is used *sens phrase*, for example by many of Ammianus' pagan contemporaries: Rutilius Namatianus (1. 441), Palladas (*Anth. Pal.* 11. 384), and Julian often. Libanius also must have known it—though he preferred to refer to the monks in vague and uncomplimentary phrases like οἱ δὲ μελανειμονοῦντες οὗτοι (*Or.* 30. 8). The off-hand circumlocutory fashion in which Agathias describes the martyrdom of St. Stephen has led at least one critic to accuse him of paganism:<sup>2</sup> Στεφάνου . . . ὃν δὴ πρῶτον πάλαι φασὶν ὑπὲρ τῶν Χριστιανοῦς ἀριστα δοκούντων ἐθελοντῇ διακινδυνεύσαστα ὑπὸ τῶν ἐναντίων (3. 5, p. 147. 1). In order to avoid the unfortunately non-classical *vox propria* *μαρτύς* he is driven to the periphrasis *ἐθελοντῇ διακινδυνεύειν* and, since the story is recorded in the New Testament, a book not included in the canons of classical literature,<sup>3</sup> he is obliged to say *φασὶν* and refer to the Jews vaguely as οἱ ἐναντίοι.<sup>4</sup> Compare the words in which Procopius describes the crucifixion itself: τοῦ σταυροῦ . . . ἐν ᾧ τὸν Χριστὸν ἐν Ἱεροσολύμοις ποτὲ τὴν κόλασιν οὐτὶ ἀκούσιον ὑποστῆναι ὁμολογεῖται (2. 11. 14). οὐτὶ ἀκούσιον and ὁμολογεῖται as understatements of the Creed would be hard to match! Ammianus is less extreme in this respect than the Byzantines: he does use the word 'martyr', albeit with the usual sort of qualifications, 'martyras (id est divinitati acceptos)' (27. 7. 6), 'qui deviare a religione compulsi, pertulere cruciabiles poenas ad usque gloriosam mortem intemerata fide progressi, et nunc martyres appellantur' (22. 11. 10).

It would be quite wrong to see in this avoidance of Christian terms on the part of Malchus, Procopius, Agathias, and Theophylact Simocatta anything more than a literary affectation. Malchus was certainly a Christian, for Photius

<sup>1</sup> See below, pp. 319 f.

<sup>2</sup> Vossius, *de hist. gr.* p. 324 ed. Westermann, cited by W. S. Teuffel, 'Agathias von Myrin', *Philologus* i (1846), 507 n. 52.

<sup>3</sup> Though M. Apostolopoulos, *Μένανδρος Προτέκτωρ μιμητὴς Ἀγαθίου* (Diss. Athens, 1894), p. 33 points out a reminiscence of Matt. xvi. 26 at 3. 12, p. 165. 22, it is the more striking for being exceptional.

<sup>4</sup> S. Costanza, 'Orientamenti Cristiani

della Storiografia di Agatia', *Helikon* ii (1962), p. 93 seems misguided in citing this story as evidence for Agathias' religious orthodoxy. He takes the description of Hagia Sophia (5. 9, p. 295. 8, cited above) in the same way. Apostolopoulos however (op. cit. [n. 3], pp. 38–39) rightly attributes the artificiality of the passage to Agathias' being one of the class of 'Profanhistoriker', ἀπομιμούμενοι τὸ λεκτικὸν τῶν κλασικῶν ἱστορικῶν.

says so (*Bibl. Cod.* 78). Yet modern scholars, partly on the strength of the periphrasis with which he introduces the word 'presbyter' (above p. 316), and partly from the tone of his reference to the pagan philosopher-poet Pamprepus of Panopolis (fr. 20), have concluded that he was a pagan.<sup>1</sup> That the first point is baseless will be demonstrated below (p. 320), and as for the second, we fail to see why the words ἦλθεν [Παμπρέπιος] ἐς Βυζάντιον, τὰ μὲν ἄλλα ἀγαθὸς καὶ χρηστὸς φαινόμενος, ὡς δὲ ἐν Χριστιανοῦς πάντας ἐχούσῃ πόλει, τὸ Ἑλληνικὸν αὐτοῦ τῆς θρησκείας οὐκ ἔχον ὑπόκρισιν, ἀλλὰ μετὰ παρρησίας προδήλως δευσιμένον, ἐς τὴν τοῦ καὶ ἑτέρα τῆς ἀρρήτου σοφίας εἰδέναι (i.e. magic) ὑπόνοιαν ἔγε (*H.G.M.* i. 421. 16 f.) should be 'im Munde eines Christen schwer denkbar' (Laqueur, loc. cit.). Not only does Malchus display not a trace of partisanship for Pamprepus, but the tone of the passage implies, if anything, that he actually disapproved of Pamprepus' ostentatious and unrepentant paganism. Equally irrelevant is the fact that he calls the pagan Proclus ὁ μέγας (ibid. 421. 12). Even John Philoponus, in his *De aeternitate mundi contra Proclum*, had the grace to refer to his distinguished adversary as ὁ μέγας Πρόκλος (p. 74. 25 Rabe)—but ὁ μέγας may be no more than a stock epithet, as it is for Proclus' teacher Syrianus.<sup>2</sup> In any event what are such slight indications, drawn from a mere handful of fragments clumsily excerpted for didactic purposes against the express statement of Photius, who had read the whole book?<sup>3</sup> Procopius also lets us see in a few places that he was a nominal, if not a fervent, Christian. For example he is speaking from the Christian side when he says (1. 15. 25) τὴν δὲ δόξαν ἐπὶ τὸ εὐσεβέστερον μετέθεντο, ἅπαντες Χριστιανοὶ γεγεννημένοι, and (*Aed.* 6. 2. 15) θρησκείαν γὰρ πάντες καὶ εἰς ἐμὲ τὴν τῆς πολυθείας ἐνόσουν. Compare also *Anecd.* 11. 14 αἰρέσεις . . . Μοντανῶν τε καὶ Σαββατιανῶν καὶ ὅσαις ἄλλαις πλανᾶσθαι αἱ τῶν ἀνθρώπων εἰώθασιν γνώμαι.<sup>4</sup> We ought not at any rate to be so deceived by his 'Objektivität' towards Christian things as was one of his scribes, who wrote at 4. 1. 23 οὐκ ὀρθῶς παρεισφύρεις τῇ τῶν Χριστιανῶν πίστει δαιμόνιον καὶ τύχην καὶ εἰμαρμένην.<sup>5</sup> For he refers to pagan beliefs in exactly the same manner: τῆς παλαιᾶς δόξης ἦν νῦν Ἑλληνικὴ καλεῖν νενομίκασι (1. 25. 10: this is a key passage, for the same chapter contains an exactly similar explanation of a Christian term—*ιερέως* . . . ὅνπερ καλεῖν πρεσβύτερον νενομίκασι (1. 25. 32, cf. 1. 20. 1)).<sup>6</sup> And there are many passages in which Procopius

<sup>1</sup> Bury, *Latin Roman Empire*, ii<sup>2</sup> (1923), p. 418 n. 2, and R. Laqueur, *R.-E.* s.v. Malchos, 856, followed by Stein, *Bas-Empire*, ii (1949), p. 708 n. 1.

<sup>2</sup> H.-D. Saffrey, *R.E.G.* lxxvii (1954), 396 n. 2.

<sup>3</sup> Or at any rate all that was written, for Photius indicates that the work was unfinished. The last sentence of fr. 4 (*H.G.M.* i. 390. 20) surely has a distinctly Christian character: ἐκτοτε οὖν ἡ τοῦ θεοῦ ἀνανάστησις εἰς αὐτὸν ἐτρεῖτο. Pagans found the Christian doctrine of a God of wrath particularly repugnant. The Apostate Julian, for example, exclaimed indignantly οὐδαμῶς χαλεπαίων ὁ θεὸς φαίνεται, οὐδ' ἀγαπακτῶν, οὐδ' ὀργαζομένου . . . ὡς ὁ Μανθεῖς φησὶ (*Contra Christianos*, ed. Neumann [1880], p. 190. 5 f.). Early Christian writers found the point so awkward that they allegorized it away: Lactan-

tius, however, in his *De ira Dei* made the Christian point of view quite clear (cf. P. de Labriolle, *Hist. de la litt. lat. chrét.* I<sup>2</sup> [1947], pp. 307 f.). The recognition of Malchus' Christianity drives one more nail in the coffin of Bury's theory that the works of the fifth-century historians were allowed to perish because of the paganism of their authors: cf. Stein, loc. cit.

<sup>4</sup> For Procopius' Christianity cf. Rubin, op. cit. (p. 317, n. 2), 329 f.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. F. Dahn, *Procopius von Caesarea* (Berlin, 1865), pp. 189–90. The scribes of the *Medicus* of Eunapius and the *Vestianus* of Julian have made a justification for the ignorant martyr's name.

<sup>6</sup> In fact the apparent indifference of Malchus to both paganism and Christianity in such passages led some older critics to the conclusion that Procopius was a Jew: cf. Dahn,



shows that his outlook was essentially religious: for example, at 1. 24. 13 he implies that θεοῦ λόγος ought to have checked John the Cappadocian; at 2. 11. 28 he says quite plainly ἀλλ' ὁ θεὸς . . . Ἀπάμειαν διεσώσατο, and although the means whereby this was achieved was by the showing of Apameia's treasure—a piece of the True Cross—at which Chosroes gave up his intention of plundering the city, Procopius gives no hint that he disbelieved the story himself. Agathias' position is the same. Often he shows that he holds basic religious beliefs: e.g. 3. 22, p. 188. 11 εἰ μὴ τις αὐτοὺς ἑτέρα δίδωκε γνώμη ἐκ τοῦ κρείττους, 2. 15, pp. 98–99 ἀπόρησεν δὲ ἡμῖν, εἴγε τοσοῦτο μόνον εἰδείμεν, ὥς θείῳ νῶ καὶ βουλή κρείττονι ἅπαντα διατέταται. But he too allows us to see that he is really a Christian—e.g. 1. 2, p. 17. 8 Χριστιανοὶ γὰρ ἅπαντες τυγχάνουσιν ὄντες καὶ τῇ ὀρθότητι χροῖμενοι δόξῃ, 5. 6, p. 289. 6 εὐσέβεια στεργά τε καὶ ἐνεργός, ὅποια ὑπὸ δόξης ὀρθῆς καὶ . . . προθυμίας ἐμβριθεστάτης τῷ λογισμῷ πέφυκεν ἐντυπώσθαι, 2. 29, p. 128. 8 θεολογίας . . . πράγματος οὕτω μακαρίου τε καὶ ἀνεφίκτου καὶ μείζονος ἢ κατ' ἀνθρώπους. Of Theophylact's faith there can be no doubt,<sup>3</sup> when alongside such glosses as τοῦ μεγάλου θεοῦ Ἰησοῦ, ὃν Χριστὸν τὰ κατὰ τὴν οἰκουμένην ἔθνη γεραίρουσιν (8. 4. 11) he speaks on other occasions like some pious monk—e.g. ὁ ἡμέτερος πιστούμενος Ἰησοῦς, εἰς κληρονομίαν τε παρὰ τοῦ πατρὸς τὴν οἰκουμένην λαβὼν κατὰσχέσιν τε τὰ πέρατα τῆς γῆς (7. 15. 1) and τοῦ μεγάλου θεοῦ καὶ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ (5. 12. 12).

It was then for reasons other than religious ones that these authors spoke of *res Christianae* in the way they generally did. Indeed, their affectation is not confined to the field of religion—cf. νόσῳ τῇ καλουμένῃ ἀποπληξίᾳ (Proc. 3. 20. 25), σοφίᾳ τῇ καλουμένῃ μηχανικῇ (2. 13. 26, cf. *Aed.* 1. 1. 32, 5. 11. 2). Similarly Agathias conspicuously avoids the Latin architectural term *τροῦλλα* in his description of the rebuilding of Hagia Sophia: τὸν ἐν μέσῳ ὑπερανέχοντα εἴτε κύκλον εἴτε ἡμισφαίριον εἴτε ὁτωδῆρυν ὀνόματι παρ' αὐτοῖς ἐπικεκλημένον (5. 9, p. 296. 9). It is just a stylistic device, just one aspect of the all-pervading practice of ἀρχαϊσμός.<sup>4</sup> Agathias in a particularly telling passage says: ἐς Ὀνόγουριν (a town in Lazica) . . . τήνδε δὲ τὴν ἐπωνυμίαν ἐκ παλαιοῦ ἔλαχεν τὸ χωρίον . . . ἀλλ' ἐπειδὴ Στεφάνου τοῦ θεοπεσίου ἱερὸν ἐνταῦθα ἱδρύεται . . . τῷ ἐκείνου ὀνόματι καλεῖσθαι τὸν τόπον νενόμισται. ἡμᾶς δὲ οὐδὲν, οἶμαι, τὸ κωλύον ἐς γνώρισμα τῇ ἀρχαιοτάτῃ χρῆσθαι προσηγορίᾳ, ἐπεὶ καὶ συγγραφήῃ μᾶλλον προσήκει (3. 5, p. 146. 17 f.). In spite of the fact that the place had probably been called after St. Stephen for centuries, Agathias feels that 'it is more fitting for history' to use the old name. So also Menander Protector, Agathias'

op. cit. (n. 5), p. 193, and also Stein, *Basileus*, ii. 716 n. 1.

<sup>3</sup> Further *etc.* in G. Downey, 'Paganism and Christianity in Procopius', *Church History* xlviii (1949), 91 nn. 11 and 12. Cf. 3. 4. 9, 3. 19. 6, 7. 21. 10.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Apostolopoulos, op. cit. (p. 318 n. 3), pp. 33 f., and more recently, Averil Cameron, 'Agathias and Cedrenus on Julian', *J.R.S.* lxxiii (1963), 92 n. 9.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. K. Krumbacher, *Gesch. d. Byz. Lit.* (1897), p. 250 n. 1 'er ist Christ, und lebt in einem völlig christlichen Zeitalter, schreibt aber von christlichen Dingen wie ein Heide'.

<sup>6</sup> As also does Paul the Silentary; cf.

P. Friedländer, *Joh. v. Gaza u. Paul Sil.* (1912), p. 124 n. 3.

<sup>7</sup> Agathias himself complained that he had no time to study the ancient authors μιμησέως ἕκατι (3. 1, p. 138. 12). On *mimesis* (imitation) as one of the *ἀρεταί* of history cf. H. Peter, *Gesch. Lit. über die röm. Kaiserzeit*, ii. 188. In its stylistic aspect it took the form exemplified in the words of Aristides, *Rhet.* 2. 10 περὶ δὲ ἐρμηνείας τοσοῦτον ἂν εἴποιμι, μήτε ὀνόματι μήτε ῥήματι χρῆσθαι ἄλλως πλὴν ἐκ τῶν βιβλίων. The epigrams of Agathias and his circle are similarly backward-looking—cf. P. Waltz, *L'Ancêtre vi* (1931), 1–21, R. Keydell, *Reallexikon f. Ant. u. Christentum*, v (1963) 549.

continuator, while not, it seems, extending his scruples to exclude all unqualified references to things Christian,<sup>1</sup> nevertheless feels that it would not be ἀρμόδιον ἐν συγγραφῇ to give the exact terms (presumably written in contemporary official use) of the treaty between Byzantium and Persia (fr. 12, p. 33 was necessary, especially in the case of such an important subject, τὴν τῆς ῥητορικῆς ἐπιδείκνυσθαι δύναμιν. For similar reasons each new horde of barbarians that invaded the empire was identified with some extinct tribe culled from the pages of Herodotus or Tacitus, or else referred to simply as 'Scythians'. Procopius, for example, introduces Attila and his Huns as Ἀττίλαν . . . στρατῷ μεγάλῳ Μασσαγετῶν τε καὶ τῶν ἄλλων Σκυθῶν (3. 4. 24). The Goths were regularly identified with the long extinct Getae (Procopius and Agathias are here exceptions)—a practice alluded to in a typically caustic phrase by St. Jerome: 'certe Gothos omnes *retro eruditi* magis Getas quam Gog et Magog appellare consueverunt' (*Quaest. Hebr.* 10, P.L. xxiii. 1000). In the tenth century Leo Diaconus calls Bulgarians Moesians and Russians Scythians (e.g. 9. 6, p. 149 Bonn). Agathias, while admitting some foreign names, feels that he must apologize for disfiguring his pages with them (2. 27, p. 125. 5).<sup>2</sup>

In the sixth-century historians these apologetic phrases are both more striking and easier to explain. Already in the fourth century Christian historiography had separated itself from the tradition of Herodotus and Thucydides,<sup>3</sup> and by looking to the classics for their models, like so many historians of the late empire,<sup>4</sup> Procopius and Agathias shut themselves off from a truly Christian history. That is why, for the most part, their references to things Christian look and are artificial, and have led some critics to suppose that they were somehow outsiders. Agathias has been most recently described as having 'atteggiamenti scettici e neoplatonici';<sup>5</sup> to another critic his way of referring to God as τὸ κρεῖττον seemed to show that he thought of God as 'ein ziemlich Abstraktes'.<sup>6</sup> We must not deduce, however, from their phraseology and the tone of their work that they were not interested in ecclesiastical matters.<sup>7</sup> It has been conjectured that Procopius actually intended to write an ecclesiastical history,<sup>8</sup> while Agathias is moved to unaccustomed warmth against Uranius' pretensions to theological expertise.<sup>9</sup> But in writing their histories they looked to the ancients. Following the example of most Greek historians of the empire

<sup>1</sup> Cf. e.g. fr. 11, p. 25. 16 D, fr. 57, p. 111 D. At fr. 11, p. 24. 25 and 27 D he makes his own Christianity plain.

<sup>2</sup> For which cf. e.g. Syncellus p. 316 (Cephalion).

<sup>3</sup> See above, p. 316 n. 7.

<sup>4</sup> Dexippus and Herodian, for example. Cf. Franz Joseph Stein, *Dexippus et Herodianus rerum scriptores quatenus Thucydidem secuti sint* (Diss. Bonn, 1955), with detailed bibliography.

<sup>5</sup> Costanza, op. cit. (p. 318 n. 4), p. 108. Similarly Downey, op. cit. (p. 320 n. 1), p. 98 sees Procopius' conception of *Tέχνη* as Platonic. One could add that it is in fact Neo-platonic as well (cf. P. Courcelle, *Les Lettres grecques en Occident de Macrobe à Cassiodore* [Paris, 1948], pp. 17 f. on Macr. Sat. 5. 16. 8, p. 313. 5, and 288 on Proclus, *De prov.*

*et fato* ed. Cousin, p. 138. 8) but it is more consistent with the rest of the practice of these two writers to explain their frequent references to *Tέχνη* as yet another example of *μίμησις*, this time probably of Polybius, rather than by reference to philosophical systems.

<sup>6</sup> O. Vch, 'Der Geschichtsschreiber Agathias von Myrine', *Wiss. Beilage zum Jahresbericht 1952/3 des Gymnasiums Christian-Ernestinum Bayreuth*, p. 27. A. Pertusi, 'L'atteggiamento spirituale della più antica storiografia bizantina', *Aevum* xxx (1956), 151–2, expresses a similar opinion.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. Stein, *Basileus*, ii. 715.

<sup>8</sup> Bury, *The Roman Empire*, ii. 162, 427 n. 2.

<sup>9</sup> 2. 29, p. 127. 15 f.



their sieges, for example, have a strongly Thucydidean colour.<sup>1</sup> The siege of Plataea was a very obvious τόπος, imitated by Arrian, Josephus, Dio Cassius, Dexippus, and Priscus as well as by Procopius and Agathias. Arrian (*Anab.* 2. 18), Priscus (fr. 1 b) and Agathias (3. 5 p. 147. 18) indeed use the very same phrase (δέσπεις καὶ δειφθέρας) from Thucydides 2. 75. 5. On the strength of Priscus unexpectedly advanced siege techniques were attributed to the Huns before E. A. Thompson pointed out that the fragment of Priscus in question was 'largely a cento of Thucydidean phrases'.<sup>2</sup> Clearly sieges and battle pieces in the works of such 'Thucydidean' writers are to be viewed with some suspicion. And when they come to express the occasional judgements required of the historian on the events he is describing, they are usually couched in some such Herodotean phrase as *χρὴν γὰρ γενέσθαι κακῶς* (Proc. 1. 24. 31) or *τὴν πεπραμένην ἀνέπλησεν* (4. 4. 20). To what extent, if at all, this apparent Herodotean fatalism represents their own personal opinions it is impossible to say.<sup>3</sup> One thing, however, is certain: that specifically Christian judgements, Christian terms, and any other words that smacked of the present day, would have been out of place in such an atmosphere of ἀρχαϊσμός.

But can the same be said of Ammianus? It might be objected that he was, after all, a pagan, and that we can therefore find a simpler, non-literary explanation for his reluctance to use Christian terms. But there are in fact many places in his work where he does use Christian terminology without qualification. Indeed he is far less reluctant to deal with things Christian than are the Byzantines; in their case it is hardly an exaggeration to say that they do not mention anything to do with Christianity unless they have to.<sup>4</sup> And Aurelius Victor, Festus, and Eutropius, Ammianus' pagan contemporaries, achieve the remarkable feat of writing about Constantine without mentioning Christianity at all. In Ammianus, however, we have a writer who, though a pagan, writes as though unfamiliar with Christianity in only a minority of cases. He uses, for example, the word 'orare' for Christian prayer (21. 2. 5), 'ecclesia' sans phrase for church, and numerous other words found exclusively or mainly in Christian authors<sup>5</sup> (that is to say 'indirect' as well as 'direct'

<sup>1</sup> For Procopius cf. H. Braun, *Procopius Caesariensis quatenus imitatus sit Thucydem* (Diss. Erlangen, 1885 [= *Acta seminarii Erlangenensis* iv (1886), 161-221]). Braun's examples are by no means wholly vitiated by the objections of J. Haury, *Zur Beurteilung des Geschichtsschreibers Procopius von Caesarea*, Progr. K. Wilhelm-Gymn. (München, 1896/7) ier. For Agathias: G. Franke, 'Quaestiones Agathianae', *Breslauer Philol. Abhandl.* xlvii (1914), 28 f.; Averil Cameron, 'Herodotus and Thucydides in Agathias', *Byz. Zeit.* lvi (1964).

<sup>2</sup> *C.Q.* xxxix (1945), 92 f. In fact Thompson argues that Priscus copied Dexippus' imitation of Thucydides as well as Thucydides himself. Similarly Agathias derives some of his Herodotean imitations from Procopius as well as from Herodotus himself.

<sup>3</sup> On battle pieces as a τόπος see Peter, op. cit. (p. 320 n. 5), ii. 312 f., and C. P. T. Naudé, *Acta Classica* i (1958), 92 f.

<sup>4</sup> Especially in the case of Procopius: cf. H. Braun, *Die Nachahmung Herodots durch Prokop* (Progr. Nürnberg, 1894), pp. 40 f.; B. Rubin, *R.-E.* xxiii. 1 (1957), 330 f.; cf. also Downey, op. cit. (p. 320 n. 1), pp. 89 f.; Stein, *Bas-Empire*, ii. 716, n. 1.

<sup>5</sup> Agathias, for example, says not a word of the Ecumenical Council contemporary with the events he is describing: contrast Cedrenus i, pp. 659 f. Agathias and Procopius carried out to the full the policy outlined by Apostolopoulos, op. cit. (p. 318 n. 3), p. 35; they were writing 'Προφάσεις καὶ Θεοκυδοῖδης, ἐν ᾗ οὐδεμία ἀνάγκη τὰ διατύπωσιν δογματικῶς καὶ φιλοσοφικῶς ἰδέσθαι'.

<sup>6</sup> See especially the careful study of G. B. Pighi, 'Latinità cristiana negli scrittori pagani del IV secolo', i, *Studi dedicati alla memoria P. Ubaldo* (1937), pp. 41 f., summarized in *Reall. f. Ant. u. Christentum* i (1950), 394.

Christianisms, to use the jargon of the school of Schrijnen). His description of Pope Liberius as 'Christianae legis antistes' (15. 7. 6) is regularly cited as a typical example of his reluctance to use Christian terminology. In fact 'antistes' was considered a perfectly proper way to refer to a bishop—even a pope. Liberius' successor Damasus finished one of his epigrams with the line 'Antistes Christi composuit Damasus' (ep. 5. 3, Ihm p. 9). Ihm, purely on the strength of the word 'antistes' doubted the Damasan authorship of the poem, but Damasus again refers to himself as 'Dei antistes' in a letter (ep. 1, P.L. xiii. 348b), as also did his successor, Pope Siricius (ep. 1. 15. 19, P.L. xiii. 1145). Further proof of the correctness of Ammianus' phraseology may be found in a rescript of Valentinian in 377 'Damasi sacrae legis antistitis' (Coll. Avell. 6) and another of Honorius in 409, 'Christianae legis antistes' (Const. Sirmond. 14). Ammianus regularly discusses or at least touches on the policy vis à vis Christianity of the various emperors whose reigns he has narrated. He deals with the election of Pope Damasus (27. 3. 12 f.), Constantius' deposition of Pope Liberius for refusing to depose Athanasius from the see of Alexandria (15. 7. 7), and refers to papal authority in terms which gladden the heart of the Catholic historian: 'auctoritas potior aeternae urbis episcopi' (15. 7. 10). Christianity itself he regarded as a 'religio absoluta et sincera' (21. 16. 18), a religion which 'nil nisi iustum suadet et lene' (22. 11. 5),<sup>1</sup> and he admired the modest and frugal habits of 'certain provincial bishops . . . which commend them to the Eternal Deity and his true worshippers as pure and reverent men' (27. 3. 15). Indeed, his mention of Epiphany, albeit apologetic as usual (21. 2. 5), is in fact the earliest definite mention of the feast.<sup>2</sup> There can be little doubt that Ammianus was perfectly familiar with the Christian way of life, Christian teaching, and Christian vocabulary.

Why then in the comparatively rare cases of Christian terms like *diaconus*, *synodus*, and *martyr* does he employ these apologetic phrases and circumlocutions? The first point to be made is that Ammianus' regular formula 'ut appellat' does not at all mean either that he himself was unfamiliar with the word in question or that he expected his audience to be so. A particularly clear example is 31. 10. 19: 'saepta quae appellant vivaria'. One would be forgiven for supposing that *vivarium* (a park for wild animals, game preserve) was a neologism or colloquialism, but compare Aulus Gellius, *Noct. Att.* 2. 19: 'vivaria quae nunc dicuntur, saepta . . .', and 'vivaria autem quae nunc vulgus dicit'.<sup>3</sup> The word, though not actually Ciceronian, had been in common use for centuries (see the *Lexica*), and might not have struck Ammianus as 'unclassical' at all had not the example of Gellius, a recognized authority on such matters, shown him that it was a word to be used only with caution in the best prose. E. A. Thompson, when treating Ammianus' attitude to the pagan practices of his day, observes: 'Most striking . . . is Ammianus' reference to Heliodorus, whom he calls 'mathematicus (ut memorat vulgus)' (29. 2. 6), thereby seeming to dissociate himself from the use of the word'.<sup>4</sup> Ammianus

<sup>1</sup> A phrase that recalls Tertullian's observation that the common pagan mis-spelling 'Chrestus' for 'Christus' was, though incorrect, at least a name 'de suavitate et benignitate compositum' (*Apol.* 3).

<sup>2</sup> Cf. C. Mohrman, *Études sur le latin des chrétiens* i (1958), pp. 255 f.; cf. also H.

Lietzmann, *History of the Early Church*, iii (Eng. Tr. 1949), 314 f.

<sup>3</sup> Compare the equally similar periphrasis with which Procopius introduces the same word (5. 21. 11): τοῦ περιβόλου, ὡς ἡ Πομπηιοῦ βιβλίον καλοῦσι. Procopius' reason, of course, was that the word was Latin.

<sup>4</sup> *Historical Work* (p. 316 n. 1), p. 114.



324 does indeed dissociate himself from the use of the word: not, however, because he disapproved of *astrologers*, but because Gellius again had shown him that *Geometria* was not, in the meaning 'astrologer', a 'classical' word. '*Geometria*, et *Gnomonica*, Musicam ceterasque altiores disciplinas *μαθηματικά* veteres Graeci appellabant; *vulgus* autem, quos gentilitio vocabulo Chaldaeos dicere oportet, *mathematicos* dicit' (*Noct. Att.* 1. 9. 6). Elsewhere Ammianus is careful to use the word 'correctly' to mean *astronomer* (15. 1. 4), and properly calls *astrologers* 'gentilitio nomine' *Chaldaei* (23. 6. 24). He was not, in fact, so much *apologizing* for using the 'unclassical' words *vivarium* and *mathematicus* as drawing attention to the fact that he *knew* that they were unclassical. That Ammianus did in fact draw directly on Gellius for such lore can scarcely be doubted, for Hertz long ago showed how carefully he had read the *Noctes Atticae*.<sup>1</sup> Another interesting example was detected more recently by Pighi:<sup>2</sup> in 18. 5. 6 a sentence ends *inrepsans Hannibalem*, and Clark (Berlin edition) obelized *Hannibalem* on the grounds that the *clausula* did not accord with the very strict rules with which Ammianus bound himself.<sup>3</sup> Rolfe (Loeb edition), again *cursus causa*, transposed the words, *Hannibalem increpsans*. But Ammianus knew from Gellius that '[Valerius Probus] Hannibalem, et Hasdrubalem et Hamilcarem ita pronuntiabat, ut *paenultimam circumflecteret*' (4. 7. 1). *Inrepsans Hannibalem* is a perfectly unexceptionable example of the *cursus velox*.<sup>4</sup> Such a display of learning could not fail to be appreciated by an audience that would have included Macrobius, the future compiler of the *Saturnalia*, whose familiarity with Gellius is sufficiently attested by his frequent and extensive plagiarism from that author.

But why does Ammianus choose to employ the 'ut appellant' formulas with Christian terms? According to Pighi quite simply because they were Greek words, and it was Ammianus' regular practice<sup>5</sup> to use some such explanatory phrase when introducing Greek words, and especially technical terms, into his narrative.<sup>6</sup> First a word on Ammianus' use of these formulas with Greek words which has, like his use of them with Christian terms, been a fruitful source of error. Thompson, for example, when discussing Ammianus' incomplete mastery of Latin, wrote that 'his native Greek shines through . . . on every page, and he often finds it necessary to fall back on the use of Greek words to make his meaning clear',<sup>7</sup> and Wilamowitz went so far as to include Ammianus in a history of Greek literature.<sup>8</sup> But in the first place most of these Greek words are either technical terms for which there was no Latin equivalent (or at any rate, no classical Latin equivalent), such as *ἐλέπλις* (23. 4. 10), *διχόμενις* (20. 3. 10), *ἀτομος* (26. 1. 1)—countless such examples might be cited from the works of Ammianus' Latin contemporary Macrobius<sup>9</sup>—or else explanatory glosses or

<sup>1</sup> Aulus Gellius und Ammianus Marcellinus, *Hermes* viii (1874), 257-302; one or two additions by G. B. A. Fletcher, *Rev. de Phil.* xi<sup>2</sup> (1937), 393.

<sup>2</sup> *Studia Ammianea* (Milan, 1935), p. 83.

<sup>3</sup> Pp. vi f. of vol. i of his edition (1910).

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Clark, loc. cit., or Rolfe, Loeb edition, i, pref. xxii f.

<sup>5</sup> Like most Latin writers; see G. B. Townend, *Hermes* lxxviii (1960), 98-99.

<sup>6</sup> Op. cit. (p. 322 n. 6), p. 50.

<sup>7</sup> Op. cit. (p. 316 n. 1), p. 17.

<sup>8</sup> *Die griech. Lit. des Altertums; Kultur d. Gegenwart*, i. 8<sup>2</sup> (1907), p. 201.

<sup>9</sup> Many examples cited by M. F. A. Brok, *De Perzische Expeditie van Keizer Julianus volgens Ammianus Marcellinus* (Diss. Leiden, 1959), p. 179. As for Ammianus' transliteration into Latin of Greek medical terms (Thompson, p. 17 n. 1), this was the practice of his contemporary, the famous physician Vindicianus Afer (*R.-E.* ix A 1. 30) and other Latin writers of technical treatises faced with Greek terms for which there was no Latin equivalent.

325 derivations, such as *Adiabena* from *διαβαίνειν* (23. 6. 20) or *pyramis* from *πύρ* (22. 15. 29). And secondly, most occur not in Ammianus' main narrative, but in learned digressions or the equivalent of footnotes. One case is particularly instructive: 'visa nocturna, quas *φαντασίας* nos appellamus' (14. 11. 18). For here the fact that Ammianus was a Greek is irrelevant to his use of the Greek *φαντασίας* philosophi appellant' (*Noct. Att.* 19. 1. 5), 'visa fieri dicunt, quas *φαντασίας* appellant' (ibid. 11. 5. 6). In *visa* Ammianus was already using the standard Latin equivalent for *φαντασία*, and added 'quas *φαντασίας* nos appellamus' not to make his meaning clear, but because the examples in Gellius *Acad.* 1. 40 'quam [Xenocrates] *φαντασίαν* nos visum appellemus licet') had never quite 'made it', and ought not to be allowed to stand alone in the best prose. Such learning would not have been lost on a Macrobius—though it was in fact rather misplaced: Ammianus used *visa* in the very ordinary meaning 'dreams' or 'visions', whereas the *visum* = *φαντασία* of Cicero and Gellius was a technical philosophical concept, 'sense-datum', the impression made upon the senses by external objects. Had we more of the grammatical treatises and be able to trace a similar history for many of the other Greek words he uses. In fact, so far from Ammianus 'falling back on Greek words to make his meaning clear', it would be a good deal nearer the truth to say that he was (like Macrobius) showing off his knowledge of Greek before the Latin-speaking audiences of Rome.<sup>1</sup>

But can we include the Christian terms in this category of Greek words? Surely not. In the first place whereas in the case of many of these Greek words (and Latin words like *vivarium*), the 'ut appellant' formula heralds a display of erudition, the same does not hold of the Christian terms, most of which stood in no need of explanation to any of Ammianus' contemporaries, whether Christian or pagan. Secondly in almost all the cases where Ammianus thus qualifies a Greek word, he explicitly indicates that the word is Greek by using some such phrase as 'ut nos appellamus', 'Graecus sermo appellat', or 'ut dicimus Graeci'. Where Gellius, a Latin, had written 'quas *φαντασίας* appellant', Ammianus, a Greek, makes the slight but necessary adaptation 'quas *φαντασίας* nos appellamus'.<sup>2</sup> Curiously enough de Jonge (ii, p. 129) takes the *nos* in this passage as 'nicht wir Griechen, sondern: wir Römer mit griechischer Bildung', on the strength of the one passage 22. 9. 6 'ἀπὸ τοῦ πεσεῖν (quod "cadere" nos dicimus)' (an etymology of *Pessinus*) where *nos* means 'we who speak Latin'. But this passage stands alone against many examples of 'Graeci dicimus' (22. 8. 33, 23. 6. 20), and passages such as 22. 15. 29, a derivation of the word *pyramis* from 'τοῦ πυρός, ut nos dicimus', where it is surely impossible to take *nos* in any other way than 'we Greeks'. But when qualifying Christian terms Ammianus does not say 'ut nos appellamus', or 'ut dicimus Graeci', but 'ut Christiani appellant'. His usage was exact on this point, as shown by his adapta-

<sup>1</sup> Rolfe, Loeb edition pref. xix, writes that Ammianus' 'readers and hearers were, of course, *utriusque linguae periti*'. But Q. Aurelius Symmachus, one of the most distinguished figures in the literary world of late fourth-century Rome, had very little Greek (cf. Alan Cameron, *J.R.S.* liv [1964]), and the

same is probably true of most of his contemporaries; see on the whole question P. Courcelle's *Lettres de Symmachus* (p. 21 n. 57) ch. i *passim*.

<sup>2</sup> Macrobius, on the other hand, always introduces Greek words with the formula 'ut Graeci appellant' (*Sat.* 1. 4. 9, 7. 9. 6).



tion of Gellius' 'appellant' to 'nos appellamus', and it is, therefore, plain that he did not use the 'ut appellant' formula with Christian terms because they were Greek words. The only possible alternative is that Ammianus was motivated by exactly the same reasons as the Christian Byzantines. Surely for all that Ammianus was a pagan writing in Latin and Malchus a Christian writing in Greek, Ammianus' 'Christiani ritus presbyter (ut ipsi appellant)' (31. 12. 8) is exactly parallel to Malchus' *ἐπίσκοπος, ὃν οἱ Χριστιανοὶ καλοῦσι πρεσβύτερον* (fr. 18, H.G.M. i. 414-2): plainly it would be absurd to suggest that Malchus' circumlocution was prompted by the fact that *πρεσβύτερον* was a Greek word. Ammianus' models, just like the models of Malchus, had little to say about the Christians: hence Ammianus and Malchus have little to say about the Christians. And Ammianus' model was, above all, Tacitus. It is notorious that Tacitus, following, as so often, the lead of Sallust,<sup>1</sup> eschews technical terminology, and 'will go to any lengths or contortions rather than denominate the governor of an imperial province by the exact title'.<sup>2</sup> Ammianus, an avowed continuator of the *Historiae*,<sup>3</sup> shares his master's distaste for technicalities. As W. Kroll observed, when discussing Tacitus' avoidance of technical military terminology, 'sein getreuer Schüler ist hierin Ammianus Marcellinus'.<sup>4</sup> For in spite of the fact that he had spent all his active life as a soldier, Ammianus is at times somewhat vague, on occasions deliberately inexact, in his use of military terms. All high officers tend to be *rectores*, a very general word, all bodies of troops tend to be *manipuli* or *cohortes*: to avoid the title *magister peditum* he rewrites *pedestris militiae rector* (15. 5. 2) and even uses words that are 'nur Reminiscenzen aus seinem Studium älterer Schriften',<sup>5</sup> such as *velites*—a unit abolished by Marius! Similarly with the Byzantines all high officers tend to be *στρατηγοί*, *duces* are introduced as *ἀρχόντες*, *οὓς δοῦκας καλοῦσι* and such monstrosities as *κάστρα* and *ἐξέρκετος* never sully their pages at all.<sup>6</sup> And just as Tacitus, when touching on religious matters in his day, had preferred *festis Saturno diebus* to *Saturnaliis*, and *virgines Vestae* to *virgines Vestales* (as also does Sir Ronald Syme)<sup>7</sup> so Ammianus quite naturally avoided the proper terminology of the Christian religion. In fact perhaps the most instructive commentary on the periphrases with which Ammianus introduces Christian terminology is Tacitus' own one and only reference to the Christians: 'quos . . . vulgus Christianos appellabat' (*Ann.* 15. 44).<sup>8</sup> Hence we should not be unduly

<sup>1</sup> W. Kroll, *Glotta* xv (1927), 299 n. 2.

<sup>2</sup> R. Syme, *Tacitus*, i (1958), pp. 343 f.

<sup>3</sup> For Ammianus' imitations of Tacitus cf. G. B. A. Fletcher, *Rev. de Phil.* xi<sup>3</sup> (1937), 389 f.

<sup>4</sup> *Studien zum Verständnis der römischen Literatur* (1924), p. 113. For further remarks on Ammianus' unreliability in matters of technical terminology cf. Enslin, *Klio* xxxii (1939), 93-94.

<sup>5</sup> A. Müller, 'Militaria aus Ammianus Marcellinus', *Philologus* lxxiv (1905), 575.

<sup>6</sup> Agathias' inexactitude in such matters gives rise to several prosopographical problems: cf. Stein, *Bas-Empire*, ii. 814 f., Excursus M. By contrast Olympiodorus of Thebes, who was writing not history in the strict sense, but as his title indicates, *ἐλεγχτικὸς*, admitted all the Latin official

titles, even *πρωτοκλήριος τῶν νοταρίων* (fr. 13 init.) and *ἐπατος διοικητὸς* (fr. 23): cf. E. A. Thompson, 'Olympiodorus of Thebes', *C.Q.* xxxviii (1944), 48.

<sup>7</sup> *Historia* iv (1955), 52 'the Virgins of Vesta'.

<sup>8</sup> Though many scholars maintain that what Tacitus wrote here is 'Christianos' and that by 'quos vulgus appellabat' he was contrasting the ignorance of the common people with his own knowledge that the name was really 'Christiani' (e.g. most recently H. Fuchs, *Vigiliae Christianae* iv [1950], 72 f., and R. Hanlik, *Wiener Studien* lxxvi [1963], 100 f.). Perhaps Ammianus' usage clarifies that of Tacitus: no particular credit would accrue to a Roman senator from knowing the exact name of this obnoxious Oriental sect. He might well, like our modern judges, affect

surprised that even the monk Sulpicius Severus, another reader of Tacitus, whose aim was 'ut et imperitos docerem et litteratos convincerem' (*Chron.* i. 1), attempted to make his *Chronicle* (a brief résumé of world history from the Christian point of view to answer the pagan epitomes of Victor, Festus, and Eutropius) appeal to Christian and non-Christian alike by avoiding, though not, of course, to the extent of Ammianus and the Byzantines, technical Christian terminology.<sup>1</sup> Though his work could not compete with Orosius and had very little success with either contemporaries or posterity—it survives in only one manuscript of the eleventh century with only one mention in a medieval library catalogue—it nevertheless earned its author from Scaliger the title 'ecclesiasticorum purissimus scriptor'. It is only natural, therefore, that Ammianus, although perhaps 'the greatest historical genius the world has known between Tacitus and Dante',<sup>2</sup> should nevertheless have been very much in the grip of the conventions of his *genre*, and very conscious of what should and should not find a place in a history cast in the traditional mould.<sup>3</sup> This, surely, is the sole and sufficient explanation of the apologetic phrases with which Ammianus—when he remembers—introduces technical Christian terms. The fact that he was a pagan (and a Greek) is completely irrelevant. As with the Christian Byzantines it is no more than an artifice to allow the writer to insert the occasional references to Christian terms which simply could not be avoided without disturbing the exclusively classical (and therefore pagan) character of the work as a whole. Ammianus, however, is considerably less consistent in this respect than the Byzantines. For Procopius and Agathias, composing largely with the aid of *Lexica*<sup>4</sup> in a language far removed from the spoken Greek of their own day, simply like the schoolboy composer today imitated the writers they had chosen as their models. Thus it was easier for them to be fairly consistent in their archaizing. But the Rome in which Ammianus lived and wrote was not as different from Tacitus' Rome as was Constantinople in the age of Justinian from Periclean Athens. Though it is, perhaps, unnecessary to suppose that Ammianus received his first introduction to Latin in the ranks,<sup>5</sup> it is unlikely that he had much time to study it from the literary point of view before his demobilization—unlike his contemporary and fellow-Greek Claudian, whose exceptionally pure Latinity is best explained on the hypothesis that it derived entirely from a book-knowledge of the Latin classics acquired during his schooldays in Alexandria. Ammianus, however, naturally found it impossible to avoid the influence of the colloquial Latin he had picked up during fifteen or more years as a soldier.<sup>6</sup> Indeed his work abounds in neologisms and vulgarisms of every sort, not to mention unclassical constructions, and dis-

a certain ignorance on such a point, Kösterman's latest Teubner edition rightly gives 'Christianos'.

<sup>1</sup> For examples see H. Goelzer, *Grammaticae in Sulpicium Severum observationes* (Paris, 1883), p. vi and n. 5.

<sup>2</sup> M. L. W. Laistner, *The intellectual heritage of the early Middle Ages* (1957), p. 12. It seems, however, to have been known in medieval Ireland; see L. Bieler, *J.T.S.* x<sup>2</sup> (1959), 412.

<sup>3</sup> Stein, *Bas-Empire*, i. 215.

<sup>4</sup> Ammianus' position in the Graeco-Roman historiographical tradition has re-

cently been examined in detail by C. P. T. Naudé, *Ammianus Marcellinus in die lig van die antieke geskiedskrywing* (Diss. Leiden, 1956)—with the reservations of R. Browning, *J.R.S.* xlvii (1956), 209 f.—and in *Acta Classica* i (1958), 92 f.

<sup>5</sup> See Averil Cameron, *Byz. Zeit.* lvii (1964).

<sup>6</sup> Cf. Enslin, op. cit. (n. 316 n. 1), pp. 35-36, and M. L. W. Laistner, *The Roman Historians* (1947), 71, 146-8.

<sup>7</sup> For the traces in Ammianus' 'sermo castrensis' cf. Pighi, *Studia Ammianea* (1935), pp. 65 f., 173 f. 7.



regard for mood and sequence of tenses.<sup>1</sup> It is only in the comparatively few cases where he has the example of Tacitus or a manual like that of Gellius as his guide, or in the obvious case of Christian terms, so conspicuously absent from Dio, Herodian, and Victor as well as the classical historians, that he is enabled to be on his guard. It is presumably just because such sporadic and inconsistent purism has seemed a little out of place in Ammianus' somewhat uncouth if vivid style, that his apologies for Christian terms have so often been misunderstood. But he is the first surviving representative, if not the founder, of the great Byzantine school of 'Profanhistoriker' that starts with Eunapius<sup>2</sup> and closes with Theophylact Simocatta, men who wrote (unlike Dio, Herodian, and Victor) large-scale contemporary histories, and were, therefore, driven to devise a *modus vivendi*, albeit somewhat quaint and artificial, between the Christian world in which they lived and the classical world of which Tradition obliged them to write.

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<sup>1</sup> Noted and discussed as they occur in de Jonge's Commentary on Books 14 and 15 (16 forthcoming), and works there cited.

<sup>2</sup> Thompson, *C.Q.* xxxviii (1944), 43 n. 2, following Mendelssohn's edition of Zosimus, p. xxxv n. 1, denies the claim of A. von Gutschmid, *Kleine Schriften*, v. 412, that Eunapius was the founder of this school. However this may be, as at least a substantial part of Eunapius' history may well have been published before Ammianus' history (W. R. Chalmers, *C.Q.* n.s. x [1960], 152 f., cf. Alan Cameron, *C.Q.* n.s. xiii [1963], 216), it is surely very likely that it was Eunapius who

started the fashion of referring to Christianity in the manner discussed in this article—an hypothesis that would account for the striking parallelism between Ammianus and the fifth- and sixth-century Greek historians in this respect. Such periphrases do in fact occur in the curtailed version of Eunapius preserved by Zosimus, e.g. at 4. 40. 5, 5. 19. 5, and cf. Eunapius *Vit. Soph.* 476. Thompson, *op. cit.* 52, suggests that it was through the medium of Olympiodorus that Ammianus influenced the Greek historians, but hardly in this respect, for Olympiodorus eschewed such purism (see above, p. 326 n. 6).

#### PROCOPIUS AND THE CHURCH OF ST. SOPHIA

IN a recent issue of this journal, G. Downey has published a discussion of the varying names and titles given by different Byzantine writers to the church of St. Sophia in Constantinople.<sup>1</sup> He remarks that Procopius in his History of the Wars "mentions the name Σοφία as though it required some explanation: Βασιλίσκος δὲ ἀφικόμενος ἐς Βυζάντιον ἐκέκτητο ἐκάθητο ἐς τὸ ἱερὸν Χριστοῦ μεγάλου θεοῦ (Σοφίαν καλοῦσιν οἱ Βυζάντιοι τὸν νεῶν, ταύτην δὲ μάλιστα τῷ θεῷ πρέπειν τὴν ἐπωνυμίαν ἡγούμενοι)"<sup>2</sup> and, again, that Procopius "thought he knew what Σοφία meant, and also thought it interesting or necessary to explain it."<sup>3</sup> As Socrates, in his Ecclesiastical History, makes it clear that the name Σοφία was current when he wrote, in the first half of the fifth century AD (τὴν μεγάλην ἐκκλησίαν . . . ἣτις Σοφία μὲν προσαγορεύεται νῦν),<sup>4</sup> it might seem odd that Procopius should think an explanation necessary; yet Downey suggests that we can deduce from his words that although the name itself was familiar, Procopius' contemporaries were in the dark as to its theological implications, now elucidated for them by Procopius.

I would suggest, however, that this piece of theology is not only un-theological (Χριστοῦ τοῦ μεγάλου θεοῦ is as much a gloss as Theophylact's τοῦ μεγάλου θεοῦ Ἰησοῦ, ὃν Χριστὸν τὰ κατὰ τὴν οἰκουμένην ἔθνη γεραίρουσιν)<sup>5</sup> but susceptible of quite a different explanation. Its motive is, in fact, the desire to write as "classical" a narrative as possible, a desire which takes the form of an affected ignorance of names and institutions unknown to Herodotus and Thucydides, and which pervades the work not only of Procopius but of most of the representatives of the early Byzantine school of classical historiography beginning with Ammianus Marcellinus, whose models, as he wrote in Latin, were Sallust and Tacitus.<sup>6</sup> The phrase καλοῦσιν οἱ Βυζάντιοι is an unmistakable sign of this *Objektivität*.<sup>7</sup> Thus Procopius "explains" what a silentary is and gives the name as though it is as unfamiliar to his Byzantine readers as it would

<sup>1</sup> "The Name of the Church of St. Sophia in Constantinople," *HTR* 52 (1959), 37f.

<sup>2</sup> *BV* I.6.26, repeated almost word for word at *Aed.* I.1.21.

<sup>3</sup> Downey, *art. cit.*, 38 and 40.

<sup>4</sup> II.16, *PG* 67, 217.

<sup>5</sup> VIII.4.11.

<sup>6</sup> Many more examples, and full discussion, will be found in J. Veril and A. Cameron, "Christianity and Tradition in the Historiography of the Late Empire," *Classical Quarterly*, N.S. 14 (1964), 316 f.

<sup>7</sup> A useful shorthand term for the phenomenon, first applied to Procopius by F. Dahn, *Procopius von Caesarea* (Berlin, 1865).

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## THE SCEPTIC AND THE SHROUD

I FEEL too young to be giving an inaugural lecture—and what is more serious, I seem to be of the wrong sex, for there are, I am told, only fifteen women arts professors in all the many colleges of this university. It is pleasant, then, to think that another of them, Janet Bately, is in King's College too, and gave her own inaugural lecture here only a month or so ago. And it must be one of the privileges of these occasions to be able to look around and see so many old and new friends. These are hard times, but we academics will remain lucky people as long as it is still possible to build up the connections at home and abroad which so often extend to real friendship.

One who is sadly not able to be here today precisely because of the demands of this international scholarly community is my teacher Arnaldo Momigliano, a friend and inspiration to so many of my generation in London. His Warburg seminars taught us that 'ancient history' cannot be confined to the traditional problems of the Greats syllabus. It is part of the whole sweep of history, and requires from its exponents a range which demands all the support of a great university like London. But for all his cosmopolitanism, Arnaldo Momigliano remains deeply Italian, indeed, as he would put it, Piedmontese. And typically, he was quick to point out that I am behaving as a good pupil should by presenting a subject so closely connected with the history of Turin.<sup>1</sup>

In the person of my predecessor, Howard Scullard, London University and King's College knew thirty-five years of solid achievement in ancient history. Anyone who can write one of the best text books ever—*From the Gracchi to Nero*—and then revise it three times is not made of common stuff.<sup>2</sup> As indefatigable an editor as a writer, Howard Scullard could, it sometimes seemed, coax books out of stone; he will be remembered not only for his many books but for the kindness and modesty of his personality, which I had much reason to appreciate as a young scholar. In his retirement he is bringing out all the books he has clearly been saving up, from *Roman Britain* to *The Elephant in the Greek and Roman World*. We all wish him many more.

This very month has seen the introduction of a new charter uniting the theological and secular arms of King's College after one hundred and fifty years of the College's history. It seems appropriate, then, to have chosen a subject of religious history to mark the occasion.

In 1978, on the four hundredth anniversary of its removal to Turin, the Holy Shroud of Turin was formally 'exposed' to public view.

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This event, and the publicity which followed it, in the shape of books, exhibitions and a television film, was met by enormous public interest which shows no sign of abating. I need not remind this audience that the Shroud bears a full-length reversed image, best visible in negative, of a crucified man. Is this really the face of the historical Jesus? Most of us, I suspect, have some sort of stake in having the matter proved one way or the other, and we are waiting even now for scientific results which might tell us at least the date and provenance of the Shroud, and explain how the image was transferred to the cloth.

But even if the long-awaited carbon-14 dating process did reveal that the Shroud is or could be a first-century object, there remain many puzzles, and in particular those caused by the great gap in the known history of the Shroud, from the death of Jesus (if it is genuine) to the fourteenth century, when it is first securely attested in literary sources. Most of my argument today will be concerned with the question of whether that gap can be filled. Much publicity has been given recently to the theory that those 'missing years' can be explained by the simple expedient of arguing that the Shroud is identical with an image of Christ whose history we *do* know—namely the Image, or 'Mandylion,' of Edessa. This cannot be true; yet I find that many people do generally accept that the Shroud of Turin *can* be traced back to the early centuries through the history of a central Byzantine image. If this is so, the case for its credibility as an authentic relic is greatly strengthened. And so it does seem worth exploring the story of the Image of Edessa in some detail.

It is a story which raises all sorts of basic questions about how religious tokens are produced, and used, to suit the needs of a particular society. The story will take some time, and need careful exposition, but it will have important consequences for the history of the Shroud of Turin, to which I shall presently return.

For the Image of Edessa, the critical moment lay in the sixth century AD, when despite the 'fall of the Western Empire', the Mediterranean world could still be said to represent a unity.<sup>4</sup> On the very eve of Islam, the mechanism by which that unity was maintained was provided by Christianity.

It was a Christianity that was still being pushed through by force.<sup>5</sup> This was an age, like our own, of refugees. We hear of the more or less forced conversion of thousands of pagans under Justinian, as the state purged intellectuals and spread the official form of Christianity by organised missions.<sup>6</sup> Such was the cost of enforcing orthodoxy

that a recent author has drawn an extended comparison between Justinian's policies and Stalin's collectivisation.<sup>7</sup> It was a time of confrontation. Men still educated in the traditional pagan classics somehow had to come to terms with icons, monks, doctrinal strife. One of these was my sceptic—the historian Procopius. In the course of his history of Justinian's wars he described the Persian siege of the Mesopotamian city of Edessa in the year AD 544.<sup>8</sup> For the people of these eastern cities, threatened even then by Iran, Constantinople was far away and its armies were small; they longed rather for some physical tokens of Christianity which they thought would give them surer protection.<sup>9</sup> Thus the people of Apamea firmly believed that they had been saved by their piece of the True Cross. But Edessa was special, for it had a letter from Jesus himself, and even more, a picture of Christ 'not made with hands', thus a miraculous impression of Christ's face. And the Edessenes attributed their city's escape to this divine protection.<sup>10</sup>

But Procopius, though he describes the siege in some detail and with special interest and emphasis, does not mention the image. Is it, as Sir Steven Runciman suggested in a splendid paper, written, incredibly, fifty years ago, because he was a sceptic and, as Sir Steven puts it, wanted, like a good classical historian, to 'disinfect' his narrative of such superstitious tales?<sup>11</sup> Or is that no wondrous icon existed until after the event—that it came into being specifically between AD 550, the date of the *Wars*, and the 590's, when it figured in the account of the siege by the Antiochene church historian Evagrius?<sup>12</sup> This was the suggestion of André Grabar, who saw the image as emanating from a late sixth-century context of military *palladia* in the wars between Byzantium and Iran.<sup>13</sup> Now this is the very object which has been identified with the Shroud of Turin. Its exact date and origins are therefore crucially important. We do know that it survived Arab rule in Edessa to be taken to Constantinople in AD 944, by which time it was known as the Mandylion of Edessa; thereafter it became one of the most important religious possessions of Byzantium, and was to be copied innumerable times in church decoration in places far removed from Constantinople.<sup>14</sup>

If the Image of Edessa can be shown not to go back to the earliest times, its identification with the Shroud will not help believers at all. Can it, then, be dated?

Let us return to the siege of AD 544 and to Procopius 'the sceptic'. A long time ago, even before I became an assistant lecturer at King's



College in the well-remembered tenure of Sir Peter Noble, I had the temerity to write an article on exactly the "scepticism" of Procopius.<sup>15</sup> I sincerely hope I could improve on it now; but I find with some relief that I have not rejected its basic argument, which rested on two observations—that a writer of this date, sponsored by the emperor, was not very likely to be genuinely sceptical of the official religion, and that many passages in Procopius's works in fact show him in a very different light. Procopius has been admired by generations of scholars from Gibbon on precisely for his supposed 'rationalism', his freedom from what Edward Gibbon regarded as the superstition of the times, in other words for his classicism.<sup>16</sup> Yet I should like to stress now how very often he introduces holy men into his narrative, how constantly he interprets events so as to reveal the working of God's plan for the world. 'God saved Apamea', he says, quite straightforwardly, after telling of the miracle of the True Cross.<sup>17</sup> Procopius, again, is famous for his unusual protests against doctrinal strife, and this above all has given him the reputation of 'sceptic', 'rationalist', even, most anachronistically, 'freethinker'.<sup>18</sup> Yet here again he is not what he seems. For after making a great show of not wanting to include ecclesiastical or doctrinal material in his political history he concludes that after all God is all-powerful, and that doctrinal dispute must not lead to loss of faith.<sup>19</sup> When he remembers, Procopius adopts a rather dry and classical style, but do not be misled into thinking that this means he was not himself a believer.

So then, the siege of Edessa, a great early Christian city, now the dirty little town of Urfa in SE Turkey. Procopius's account of Chosroes's first threat to Edessa in AD 540 is, far from being sceptical, rather remarkable, in that it is the only place in the *Wars* where he uses absolutely unequivocal language about Jesus. He goes out of his way to recount in detail the story of how King Abgar Ukkama V ('Abgar the Black') had sent to Jesus for a cure for his gout, and had received a letter from Christ himself promising a cure, with an addition guaranteeing that the city of Edessa would never be taken.<sup>20</sup> This story, and the letter kept at Edessa, were already famous—and discussed—before Procopius's time. Indeed, the letter had been declared apocryphal in AD 494.<sup>21</sup> Yet when he introduces the story, Procopius says openly

'At that time Jesus the Son of God was in the flesh among the people of Palestine, showing that he was truly the Son of God by his freedom from sin and his miracles.'<sup>22</sup>

Nowhere else in the *Wars* is there so clear a statement of Christian belief. It is true that Procopius is not sure whether the promise of safety for Edessa is genuine.<sup>23</sup> But he concludes that even if not, it is still an instrument of God's will to preserve the orthodoxy of the people of Edessa. Nothing here suggests scepticism, whether of Christianity or of religious tokens as such. Nor can we argue that Procopius fails to mention the portrait of Christ because he modelled his account on Eusebius, who omits it too.<sup>24</sup> For Procopius's version is different in many ways, and he certainly had access to other and more recent Edessene sources. He criticises the story of the addition—not the letter itself—only from the historian's source-critical viewpoint. Why, when he is so interested in the *letter*, should he have wanted to exclude the *picture*, if he knew of it? His general treatment of the Edessa story and its context among the stories of Apamea, Sergiopolis and Antioch in fact gives great prominence to religious factors,<sup>25</sup> and it is clear that had he known the story of the miraculous portrait, he would have been struck by its similarity to that of the saving of Apamea by the piece of the Cross.

Procopius, then, was as sensitive as anyone else in his society to the constraints of contemporary belief. He knew as well as anyone, too, that the tension points were the points of religious change. If he does not mention the Image of Edessa, it is because he did not know of it.

Was there, then, a date at which we can say that the Image first saw the light of day as a wondrous icon?

We may answer that question in the affirmative—such a date has been narrowed down to the later sixth century, a central point in a long and complex evolution. Before that time there is no mention of a miraculous image. The earliest token in the Abgar legend was the letter of Jesus—and even that cannot be traced back in the tradition further than the early fourth century.<sup>26</sup> When the pilgrim Aetheria visited Edessa around AD 400 the letter was still the city's main protection.<sup>27</sup> By the time of the composition of the early fifth-century Syriac work known as the *Doctrina Addai* there is indeed mention of a portrait, but it is a portrait painted by Abgar's messenger, Hannan, or Ananias, for Abgar's own information; it has no special importance or miraculous qualities.<sup>28</sup> Clearly this is the first stage in the evolution of the Image, and it belongs naturally to a time when religious images were multiplying and already causing controversy, just as the icon 'not made with hands' belongs in the later context when others of these images were becoming known.



Eusebius, as I have said, made no mention of a picture. Was this because of his hostility to religious images,<sup>29</sup> or because he knew nothing about it at all? I suspect the latter is the explanation, and that the picture only entered the tradition at a later stage. The *Doctrina Addai* shows more clearly than anything else could that when a picture was first in point, it was merely the work of a human artist. Yet in Evagrius's account it is already an icon 'not made with hands', that is, an image miraculously produced.

A later stage still is reached in the apocryphal 'Acts of Thaddaeus' where it is told how Ananias wanted to record the appearance of Christ but was unable to do it, whereupon Christ, understanding his difficulty, asked for a cloth and washing his face, wiped it on the cloth and left the imprint of his face upon it; he gave the cloth to Ananias telling him to take it back to Edessa.<sup>30</sup> And in the eighth century St. John Damascene expanded on this developed version when he wrote that Ananias was prevented from accomplishing his task because of the brightness blazing from the face of Christ, whereupon 'Christ put a cloth to his divine and life-giving face and left an imprint of his own likeness on the cloth and sent it to Abgar.'<sup>31</sup>

By this time Edessa had long been under Arab rule, yet the fame of the Image had spread and it was often cited during the Iconoclast controversy, for example by the patriarch Germanus of Constantinople, who referred to it as the likeness which Christ had imprinted on a *soudarion*, a head cloth.<sup>32</sup> From now on it was universally regarded as an imprint on cloth, and soon called the Mandylion, by which name it was normally later known, a word which is clearly related to the Arabic *mandil*, meaning a small cloth or handkerchief, deriving (through late Greek) from the Latin *mantelium*, a classical word with similar meaning.<sup>33</sup> Another very similar, though extremely rare, Greek word could it is true mean a mantle or cloak, being the diminutive of *manduas*, but the alternative Greek words used to explain the term 'mandylion' applied to the Image of Edessa make it quite clear that it does here denote a small cloth, such as one might use to wipe the face or hands,<sup>34</sup> and translatable, as we shall see, in Crusader sources by *toella*. In any case, the form of the Image of Edessa story as reported in the Acts of Thaddaeus and by St. John Damascene makes quite impossible the notion that the cloth in question could have been the extant shroud, even if we could believe the idea that it was folded (why?) for many

centuries in such a way that only the face could be seen.<sup>35</sup> For Christ wiped his face on the cloth while he was alive and gave the cloth himself to Abgar's messenger; this is utterly different from what is suggested by the Shroud, which bears beyond all doubt the complete bodily image back and front of a dead and wounded man lying in a prone position, and could only have acquired its markings from a body lying in such a way.<sup>36</sup>

The story of the Image of Edessa, then, is the fascinating record of the evolution of a religious token, through several distinct stages each more complex than the one before. If the Abgar legend itself did not originate before the third to fourth centuries, it is clear that there is no such tradition of a picture in the early centuries either, and that there must have been a moment when a physical picture—and later a cloth with an imprinted face—must actually have been produced in response to the desire to validate the growing story.

Most predictable in this long evolution was the emergence of the portrait as a miraculous icon in the later sixth century. Consciousness of religious images was raised at this period, and our documentation of them increases accordingly. What is more, mid to late sixth-century Syria produced just such another image 'not made with hands' exactly in the 550's (thus contemporaneous with our image).<sup>37</sup> This one was quickly taken to Constantinople, but like most of the other important early icons it was lost or destroyed during Iconoclasm. We do know of others, for example the Christ-icon on the Chalke gate of the imperial palace in Constantinople, and the Christ Antiphonetes of the church of the Virgin at Chalkoprateia,<sup>38</sup> also in the capital, in fact very near the palace.<sup>39</sup> As the 'letter of Jesus' was deployed at Edessa in times of military danger, so icons of Christ and the Virgin were constantly displayed during the great siege of Constantinople in AD 626.<sup>40</sup> What are all these manifestations but the predictable result of a situation where the religious domain had come perhaps for the first time to embrace almost the whole society, at last outweighing the prestige of classical letters?<sup>41</sup> And what more appropriate moment for the emergence of the Image of Edessa?

Can we be more precise, therefore, about the date of its 'finding'? There is actually a clear allusion to it in a Syriac hymn on the subject of the cathedral of Edessa.<sup>42</sup> This main church of the city was rebuilt under the orthodox bishop Amazonius in the 550's after it had been destroyed by a great flood; it was dedicated, like Justinian's church in Constantinople, to the Holy Wisdom, and, also

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like the great Hagia Sophia, it seems to have had a non-figural decoration of different sorts of marble.<sup>43</sup> It would be natural to date the hymn soon after the rebuilding which it commemorates, in which case the Image too would be firmly dated to the middle of the sixth century. But Grabar argued that on grounds of its symbolism the hymn must belong much later—to the late seventh century.<sup>44</sup> Thanks to recent work, however, this unlikely hypothesis may be discounted.<sup>45</sup> The hymn would make far more sense if it had been written fairly soon after the rebuilding, and its symbolism, it has now been argued, can after all be located as convincingly in the sixth as in the seventh century.<sup>46</sup> If then it does date from the middle of the sixth century, we would have a testimony to the image as an image 'not made with hands' before Evagrius. But unfortunately it is impossible to be completely precise. There are also (for such is the way of scholarship) problems with the translation at just the crucial point. Either the Syriac text says that the marble of the new church is *like* the image 'not made with hands' or that it is 'imprinted with' or 'set with' the image. Syriac scholars do not agree, though there seems to be a balance in favour of 'set with'.<sup>47</sup> But if this means that the image was somehow fixed into the wall of the church, it would be our only testimony to such an unusual placing of an icon. I am also surprised at the casual way in which the allusion to the image is slipped into the hymn in the middle of a general description of the church. It would be admittedly easier to understand this if the hymn were a little later in date. It is not possible to be absolutely sure, therefore, whether the hymn is earlier than Evagrius's *Church History*. But it is worth noting that neither here nor in Evagrius is there any reference to a cloth of any kind.

Was the Image, therefore, in its sixth-century phase, a painted icon? There was apparently a stage of transition from painted portrait, as in the early stage of the story, to imprint on cloth, but the language of the texts, as so often with the language of late antique art, is mostly ambiguous. The term 'image not made with hands', using the Greek word *eikon*, as in Evagrius, and having its Syriac counterpart in the hymn, is not sufficient in itself to rule out a cloth, since it was also applied to the Mandyliion in its final phase by the tenth-century *Narratio* at a time when everyone believed that it was indeed a cloth.<sup>48</sup> Thus when we read that in the eighth century one Athanasius bar Gumaye, a prominent Jacobite in Arab service, obtained possession of the Image and had a replica made which he was able to substitute successfully for the original when the time

came to return it to the orthodox party, we must exercise caution, even though the language of painting is used in the Syriac text, and we are told that the copy was so close to the original that both sides thereafter claimed that they had the real Image:

'he brought a clever painter and asked him to paint one like it . . . there was a portrait as exactly as possible like [the original] because the painter had dulled the paints of the portrait so that it would appear old'.<sup>49</sup>

For in the tenth century too a copy was made, and *Narratio* too uses the language of painting, or rather, one should say, neutral language, in describing it.<sup>50</sup> Certainty about the date of the *Acta Thaddaei*, where the cloth is clearly mentioned, might help to solve this problem for us, but such certainty is still out of our reach.<sup>51</sup> We can only say at the moment that in the Syriac narrative about Athanasius there is no hint of reference to a cloth. The *Acta Thaddaei* show such elaboration of the simple early story that I tend to think they are later than the sixth century, especially as there is so close a link between their version and those of the defenders of images in the eighth century. Procopius, after all, knew nothing of cloth or icon, yet he is well informed about Edessa and does not merely derive his knowledge from Eusebius. A change from icon to cloth would have occurred most naturally in the troubled phase of orthodox-Jacobite rivalry in the Arab-dominated Edessa of the seventh and eighth centuries. On the other hand, it is more than likely that the Mandyliion known in the tenth century had the appearance of a dark old icon, as Michael's words also suggest, and that we need not suppose that there was a real 'changeover' at all. It would have been the belief that changed, not the Image itself. One or two conclusions seems to follow, each equally unpalatable to those who want to identify the Mandyliion and the Shroud: either the Mandyliion was a cloth fabricated in the eighth century, or it was never a cloth at all, in which case it could of course never have been 'revealed' to be the Shroud.<sup>52</sup> That it did not go back to the time of Christ, either as painting or cloth seems to me indisputable. And that there was an awkward gap in its history, when later believers had to suppose that it was somehow hidden away, is proved by the elaborate finding story offered by the tenth-century *Narratio* to explain the role assigned to it in the siege of AD 544.<sup>53</sup>

The real reason for the 'finding' of the Image in 544 lies indeed in the situation of the Eastern church at that time. A few years earlier came the deaths of two Monophysite leaders, John of Telia and



Severus of Antioch, followed by the blow of the devastation of Antioch and Persian attacks on other Eastern cities. To this the Monophysite response was to consecrate James Bar'adai nominal bishop of Edessa, with an extensive brief to revitalise the Monophysite church.<sup>54</sup> In the next years he is said to have ordained twenty-seven Monophysite (or as they were now often called after him Jacobite) bishops, two patriarchs and 'very many clergy', including among the bishops the very John of Ephesus who wrote James's *Life*<sup>55</sup>—a record of the total involvement of such holy men in the political and social situation of their day. This James Bar'adai, Monophysite bishop of Edessa, in fact was to become one of the most important ecclesiastical figures of the period.

So there were two bishops of Edessa in AD 544—the orthodox Eulalius and the Monophysite James. It was the orthodox who later possessed the rebuilt cathedral and with it the Image, as is clear from the Syriac hymn, and we may suppose that this was still the case in the 590's from the fact that the strictly orthodox Evagrius makes no mention of an alternative. Feeling between the parties ran high however: under Maurice four hundred Jacobite monks are said to have been killed in a persecution at Edessa and in the early seventh century, Heraclius was refused communion by the then Jacobite bishop and promptly handed over the cathedral and its treasures to the orthodox.<sup>56</sup>

It was said long before this that the 'finding' of the Image of Edessa, in the form of an icon 'not made with hands', took place in the context of the orthodox side at the time of, or more probably soon after, the siege of AD 544,<sup>57</sup> and I am sure that this is correct. Our 'sceptic', Procopius, did not mention it because he did not know it, most probably because it was 'found' only after the siege and its role in the siege developed *post eventum*.<sup>58</sup> The orthodox side needed a counterattraction to the publicity surrounding the glamorous James Bar'adai. This is in no way to 'reduce' the appearance of religious relics or tokens simply to the level of ecclesiastical politics. But it does not explain exactly how the icon was discovered, or how it later became a cloth. By the tenth century, when it was brought to Constantinople an elaborate story was current of how in AD 544 a noble female figure, larger than life size, had told the bishop Eulalius where he would find the image.<sup>59</sup> We need not suppose that this is actually what happened.

What then of the Mandylion and the Shroud?

It is clear by now, I think, that the Mandylion of Edessa in its

final form was, to put it bluntly, either a fabrication or a case of mistaken identity. If so, a simple conclusion follows: those who believe that the Shroud of Turin may be genuine cannot also identify it with the Mandylion.<sup>60</sup> The whole point of the identification was to give the Shroud a 'history', yet now that 'history' is seen to be worse than useless as a validation of the Shroud.

I have argued from the texts that the early story of the Mandylion and its later more elaborated versions all suggest that it was conceived as having been a small cloth or face towel, as the name implies. The earliest artistic representations of the Mandylion suggest that the physical object known in the tenth century and later was indeed a small cloth, whether stretched out on a board and thus looking like an icon, as the *Narratio* tells us it was,<sup>61</sup> or shown imaginatively as a loose piece of cloth that could be held in the hand. Thus we have it in the Sinai icon of the tenth century showing Abgar holding the Mandylion,<sup>62</sup> in the eleventh-century menologion at Alexandria<sup>63</sup> and in the miniature in the Madrid MS. of Scylitzes, now dated to the twelfth century, where the Emperor Romanos is seen receiving the Mandylion, depicted as a free-flowing cloth.<sup>64</sup> And the countless copies of the Mandylion which were incorporated into the mural decoration of Eastern churches from the twelfth century on invariably depicted the image simply as a face.<sup>65</sup> If it were really true that the Mandylion was suddenly revealed as the folded Shroud in AD 1204, as is suggested,<sup>66</sup> then of course these representations of it from the twelfth century and earlier would be irrelevant, since they derive from a time when its true identity was still unknown. On the other hand, if my earlier arguments have any cogency, the Mandylion could not be identified with the Shroud unless it were admitted that the Shroud too was manufactured to suit a growing religious tradition. And as we shall see I am deeply sceptical of any such hypothetical revelation in 1204.

On another level, it has often been suggested by sindonologists that late antique portraits of Christ, among them the Image of Edessa, were based on the face on the Shroud.<sup>67</sup> This is of course to reduce the Image of Edessa to the standing of a mere picture. But aside from that, and without going into the very complicated art-historical problems of the dating and stylistic analysis of the few surviving early Christ portraits,<sup>68</sup> I think one can now see exactly how much speculation would be involved in trying to maintain that the Shroud was widely known to artists and presumably others too during a period for which there is not the slightest historical evidence for

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its existence.<sup>69</sup> If carbon-14 dating did reveal that the Shroud dates from the first century AD (and if the image on it dates from the same time, which is by no means certainly the case), then art historians would have a serious problem to consider, especially bearing in mind that the clear image on the Shroud now familiar to us is revealed only in negative and was unknown until the Shroud was first photographed in 1899. But we should be no nearer to understanding where the Shroud was during the first fourteen centuries of its existence, or how it came to be known for copying.

If I am right about the history of the Mandylion, I can be fairly brief about the later fortunes of the Mandylion and the Shroud, even though—or because—from AD 1200 we enter the most delicate stage in the linkage and the one necessitating the most ingenious shifts of argumentation. Since we know that the Mandylion was kept in the Pharos chapel at Constantinople, and since the earliest stories suggest that it was thought to have been a kind of face towel, it is *prima facie* likely that it was the *toella* mentioned among the list of relics from the Pharos chapel sold to St. Louis of France by Baldwin II soon after AD 1239, and thus that it went from Constantinople to the Sainte Chapelle in Paris, where it presumably remained until the chapel was sacked in the Revolution.<sup>70</sup> As for the Shroud, it is first heard of for certain at Lirey in France in 1353: it passed to the house of Savoy in the fifteenth century and went to Turin in 1578.<sup>71</sup> Any attempt to trace it back to the attested relic collections in Constantinople comes up against the inescapable fact that the twelfth and thirteenth century reports reflect confusion both in terminology and in the nature of the objects that they report. Like the sixth century, this was an age of multiplication of relics. There was a burial cloth of Christ at the Pharos chapel with the Mandylion,<sup>72</sup> just as by 1600 there were at least two other Mandylia to be seen in Europe. In 1204 Robert of Clari reports having seen at the Blachernae church a *sydoine* of Christ bearing his image, which is the closest testimony we have at this time to anything resembling the present Shroud.<sup>73</sup> But most students of the Shroud are reluctant in any case to attempt to link this with the Shroud seen at Lirey in 1353,<sup>74</sup> while to identify it with the Mandylion entails arguing that the Mandylion was transferred to the Blachernae church only in the months preceding Robert's account in 1204,<sup>75</sup> that the *toella* in Baldwin II's relics was not the Mandylion, and that the Mandylion was somehow now opened out and revealed as the full-length Shroud.<sup>76</sup> Neither the transfer nor the revelation has left any

trace in our literary sources, and artists went on depicting the Mandylion as though it were simply a portrait of Christ's face.<sup>77</sup> Without the background of the development of the Mandylion legend, one might have been more sympathetic to the idea of transfer and revelation, despite the obvious difficulties, but now that we have seen something of the origins of the Mandylion, the wish or need to link the two becomes less pressing. It is easier, one must admit, to accept the simple and obvious hypothesis that the Mandylion of the Pharos chapel and the *sydoine* of the Blachernae were quite separate objects, each fulfilling, like the burial cloth and all the other relics of the Pharos, such as the Crown of Thorns, the Nails, the Lance and the Tunic,<sup>78</sup> a demanding contemporary need for the reassurance of physical objects.

The Byzantines would have been as amazed as ourselves to discover that the Mandylion, which they had taken as their primary image of Christ, deriving from an act of the living Christ Himself, was really a folded fourteen-foot long shroud with the image of Christ crucified. And despite the obvious drawbacks of an argument from silence, it is beyond belief that so staggering a discovery (and what could have been the reason that would have permitted tampering with so holy an object as the Mandylion?) would have been passed over by all our literary sources.

Without the history of the Mandylion to fill in its past, the Shroud's credibility must rest on other arguments. At this stage we can only say that nothing has been proved. The results of the tests done in the brief period when the Shroud was last exposed in 1978 have yet to receive full scholarly publication, and in the meantime it is extremely difficult to obtain reliable information.<sup>79</sup> No one has yet proved, as opposed to conjectured, how the image was transferred onto the cloth.<sup>80</sup> This audience does not need a reminder that it is hard to accommodate the notion of a single fourteen-foot cloth with the Gospel narratives of the burial of Jesus, nor that even if, by the long-anticipated carbon-14 dating, the cloth did turn out to be compatible with a first-century dating, it would not thereby be proved to be the shroud of Christ, still less could it 'prove' the truth of the Resurrection, as I have heard it claimed. At that point we enter a wholly different realm of explanation.

The significance of the Shroud and the Mandylion is in fact more complex, and, may I say, more interesting, than the blunt question of whether they are 'genuine'. They both illustrate the need, to borrow a phrase from anthropology, to 'thicken the description'.



As needs change, and religious consciousness changes, so the layers of their stories unfold. We in our turn must pay them the compliment of giving due weight to the total situation at each stage.

For the Mandyion the most crucial stage came in the sixth century, when it emerged as an icon 'not made with hands'. We have seen that Procopius, though somewhat independent of mind, was not sceptical of religion as such. He believed that there was a divine plan, however obscure it might sometimes seem. His personal history led him to vilify and praise the same emperor, but he did both in the religious terms that a man of his time would naturally use. It would be a serious mistake at this stage of scholarship to relegate such items as the Image of Edessa to the realm of a 'popular' religion not shared by intellectuals like Procopius.<sup>82</sup> The fact is that in late antiquity religion—that is, Christianity—played the role so cleverly ascribed in our day by Michel Foucault to sexuality.<sup>83</sup> That is, it had come to occupy every aspect of thought and life, every mode of reasoning and every activity. It worked as a power structure itself and through the existing power structure. Naturally, then, the government tended to use tokens of Christianity—the Virgin's robe, the most revered icons—as instruments of power and authority. In our own day the Fascist government of Italy did the same with the Shroud of Turin.<sup>84</sup> The late antique government, by its attempts to unify the church, heightened and increased the religious discourse and in so doing helped to create the division it was trying to suppress. A situation was thus produced in which despite deep and constant strife over the details, and even, in a few cases, revulsion at this state of affairs, nevertheless everybody, including Procopius, took it for granted that religion was of primary importance and that it deeply concerned the state. In such an atmosphere a multiplication of religious tokens was to be expected, especially if they were useful in asserting the truth of one side or other in the disputes. They were after all ways of bringing down the level of religious discourse to that of ordinary people, to the more immediate level of sense perception, of making the untouchable touchable, and the invisible visible.

Procopius, we might almost say, was not a sceptic but an anthropologist. When he criticised the addition to the letter of Jesus he recognised that its authenticity was less important than its role and function in society. God wanted to keep Edessa orthodox, he thought, and the letter and, he would have added, had he known it, the image, were the strategies He used.

Ladies and gentlemen, I have travelled a long intellectual road in

the fifteen years during which I have lived in the comfortable environment of King's College. For an ancient historian to have under one roof theology, patristics, Byzantine studies, palaeography, the Burrows Library, the Medieval Latin collection, is to find it impossible not to extend oneself. If it is also possible to sally out to learn Arabic at the School of Oriental and African Studies, and enjoy the temptations of the Warburg Institute and Dr. William's Library, to name only a few of my favourite places, then one is indeed blessed. The University of London is one of the major centres of ancient history in the country; for that, and for listening this evening, I thank you.



# NOTES

1. 'The people of Piedmont in northern Italy are a race apart'—so John Walsh in his book on the Shroud of Turin (*The Shroud*, London, 1969, p.101), following this with the statement that 'in the middle of the nineteenth century the conclusion that Piedmont had contributed nothing important or lasting to Italian art was widely held'. But Momigliano was able to offer a Piedmontese subject to Norman Baynes ('The First Political Commentary on Tacitus', *JRS* 37 (1947), pp.91—100), and there have been plenty of Piedmontese ideas, as we know ('A Piedmontese View of the History of Ideas', in A. Momigliano, *Essays in Ancient and Modern Historiography* (Oxford, 1971), pp.1—7).
2. Howard Scullard's principal works include: *Scipio Africanus in the Second Punic War* (Cambridge, 1930); *A History of the Roman World from 753 to 146 BC* (London, 1935, second edition 1951); *Roman Politics 220—150 BC* (Oxford, 1951, second edition 1973); *From the Gracchi to Nero* (London, 1959, 1963, 1970, 1976); *Shorter Atlas of the Classical World* (with A. A. M. Van der Heyden) (Edinburgh, 1962); *The Etruscan Cities and Rome* (London, 1967); *Scipio Africanus: Soldier and Politician* (London, 1970); *The Elephant in the Greek and Roman World* (London, 1974); *Roman Britain: Outpost of the Empire* (London, 1979); M. Cary and H. H. Scullard, *A History of Rome down to the Reign of Constantine*, third edition (London, 1975).
3. There is a large bibliography. See in particular Ian Wilson, *The Shroud of Turin. The Burial Cloth of Jesus Christ?* (New York and London, 1978, also published as *The Turin Shroud*, Harmondsworth, 1979). Walsh, *op. cit.* (n.1), contains a bibliography in English up to 1964; for a fuller study, see W. Bulst, *The Shroud of Turin* (English translation, Milwaukee, 1957). A television programme based on Wilson's book was shown in 1979 and reached a wide audience. It was accompanied by the 'book of the film' (Peter Brent and David Rolfe, *The Silent Witness*, London, 1978), which even more explicitly avows its debt to Wilson.
4. See Peter Brown, 'Eastern and Western Christendom in Late Antiquity: a parting of the ways', *Studies in Church History* 13 (1976), pp.1—24.
5. See P. Lemerle, *Le premier humanisme byzantin* (Paris, 1971), pp.68—73; for the later sixth century, see I. Rochow, 'Die Heidenprozesse unter den Kaisern Tiberios II und Maurice', in H. Köpstein and F. Winkelmann (eds.), *Studien zum 7. Jahrhundert im Byzanz* (Berlin, 1976), pp.120—130.
6. See E. Stein, *Histoire du Bas-Empire* II (Amsterdam, 1968), pp.369ff; John of Ephesus, *Hist. Eccles.*, ed. E. W. Brooks, *Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium*, Script. Syri III iii (Louvain, 1936), II.64 (John's missions in Asia Minor); IV 6—7 (missions in Nubia).
7. Tony Honoré, *Tribonian* (London, 1978), pp.28ff.
8. *BP* II.12. 6—13.11 (540); II 26—27 (544).
9. Apamea: *BP* II.11.14—30 (Procopius records a miraculous flame round the Cross and tells the whole story in a Christian context); Megas of Beroea: *ibid.* 6.17f; Antioch: *ibid.* 10.1 (God revealed the future);

Constantina: 13.13 (Varadotus, holy priest of Constantina, who had saved the city from Cavadh); Candidus of Sergiopolis: 20.1f. Book II shrines and personnel. Contrast the tone of *BG* IV.14.35—40, also on the siege of Edessa.

10. Edessa: J. B. Segal, *Edessa, The 'Blessed City'* (Oxford, 1970); E. Kirsten, art. 'Edessa', *RAC* IV (1959), 552—597; *id.*, 'Edessa. Eine römische Grenzstadt des 4. bis 6. Jahrhunderts im Orient', *Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum* 6 (1963), pp.155ff; H. J. W. Drijvers, 'Hatra, Palmyra und Edessa', *Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt* II.8 (Berlin, 1977), pp.863—906. The *locus classicus* for the Abgar story and the history of the image is E. von Dobschütz, *Christusbilder. Untersuchungen zur christlichen Legende* (Leipzig, 1899), I, pp.120ff.
11. S. Runciman, 'Some Remarks on the Image of Edessa', *Cambridge Historical Journal* 3 (1931), pp.238—252. Cf. p.244 'if he (sc. Procopius) had heard the story he would probably have dismissed it as absurd'. Yet Procopius's attention had been so caught by the problem of the letter and its 'addition' that it formed the *raison d'être* of a long digression. A wonder-working icon would not have been passed over without comment.
12. Evagrius, *HE* IV.27, ed. Bidez and Parmentier (1898), pp.174—76.
13. A. Grabar, *L'Iconoclasme byzantin* (Paris, 1957), pp.31ff. See my article, 'Images of Authority. Elites, Icons and Cultural Change in late sixth-century Byzantium', *Past and Present* 84 (1979), p.23.
14. For the Mandylion after 944 see Runciman, *art. cit.* (n.11), and especially A. Grabar, *La Sainte Face de Laon. Le Mandylion dans l'art orthodoxe* (Seminarium Kondakovianum, Prague, 1931). The identification of the Mandylion and the Shroud is the main thesis of Wilson, *op. cit.* (n.3).
15. 'The "Scepticism" of Procopius', *Historia* 15 (1966), pp.466—82.
16. How and why Procopius was valued stands out even more clearly if we consider this recent statement by a distinguished historian of what may still not unfairly be described as the prevailing view: "a darkness of irrationality thickened over the declining centuries of the Roman empire, superstition blacked out the clearer lights of religion, wizards masqueraded as philosophers and the fear of the masses took hold on those who passed for educated and enlightened" (R. MacMullen, 'Constantine and the Miraculous', *Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies* 9 (1968), pp.81—96). For J. B. Bury, Procopius's projected ecclesiastical history would have been "a document of some importance in the literature of toleration" (J. B. Bury, *History of the Later Roman Empire from the death of Theodosius I to the death of Justinian*, II (1923), p.428. More recently B. Rubin argued that he was a kind of nineteenth-century freethinker, or even a true sceptic in the tradition of Sextus Empiricus (B. Rubin, *Prokopios von Kaisareia* (Stuttgart, 1954), pp.332ff. (=RE 23.1 s.v. *Prokopios*). There may have been such people at this period (see Agathias, *Hist.* II.29, with my *Agathias* (Oxford, 1970), pp.101—5), but Procopius was not one of them. S. Mazzarino, *The End of the Ancient World* (English translation, London, 1966), pp.75—102ff, understood him better.



17. BP II.11.28. These words and the whole tenor of this narrative (see n.9) are enough to demonstrate that the somewhat 'detached' phraseology at II.11.14 should not be taken at face value ('a piece of the Cross on which Christ is agreed long ago in Jerusalem to have willingly undergone his punishment ...'). 'Willingly' is not a 'detached' comment by Procopius but a standard term in allusions to the Crucifixion (cf. eg. *Narratio de Imagine Edessena*, PG 113.433A), and in any case there is a world of difference between the affected phraseology which is rather common in Procopius (see *art. cit.* (n.15), p.470f.) and his straightforward description in this chapter of how the people of Apamea rejoiced and wept at the miracle of the flame, and were made sure of their salvation (II.11.19). Which should we suppose is the real Procopius?
18. Take especially BG 1.3.6: 'I consider it a sort of insane folly to investigate the nature of God. Man cannot accurately apprehend the constitution of man, how much less that of the Deity'. In the *Secret History* he protests against Justinian's persecution of heretics: 'anxious to unite all men in the same opinion about Christ, he destroyed dissidents indiscriminately, and that under the pretext of piety' (SH 18.29). The list of appeals for tolerance from the Christian side after the conversion of Constantine is a short one, as G. E. M. de Ste Croix points out in a forthcoming paper. So it is worth noting that Procopius's continuator, Agathias, rather a reflective writer, shared his disapproval of persecution (*Hist.* 1.7). Both belonged, after all to just the class of intellectuals who formed one of Justinian's main targets (see my *Agathias*, p.110).
19. BG 1.3.5f. Similarly, his conclusions about the sack of Antioch in AD 540 (BP II.10.4).
20. Of course Christianity actually came to Edessa much later—see the trenchant remarks of W. Bauer, *Orthodoxy and Heresy in Earliest Christianity* (English translation, Philadelphia, 1971), pp.1—43.
21. From the fifth century on people were inscribing the text of the letter on city gates or on the lintels of their houses, despite a papal decree against its authenticity in AD 494 (see Segal, *Edessa*, p.75, and for Ephesus, C. Foss, *Ephesus after Antiquity. A late antique, Byzantine and Turkish City* (Cambridge, 1979), p.61. The decree: *Decretum Gelasianum*, V.8 (ed. E. von Dobschütz, *Das Decretum Gelasianum*, Leipzig, 1912).
22. BP II.12.21. Note that in his final comment Procopius uses the word 'heresy' without comment, for he assumed here as elsewhere that Christianity, in its orthodox form, was right (cf. SH 11.14). This comment is rather striking in view of the fact that the letter of Christ was used in Edessa as an instrument for the reinforcement of orthodoxy (Bauer, *op. cit.* (n.20), pp.2ff.). The *Wars* is generally rather reticent, whereas the *Buildings*, as an imperial panegyric, can afford to express Christian attitudes more easily (see *Aed.* V.7.3, based on *Ev. Joh.* 4.7).
23. No doubt he was reflecting a doubt already established outside Edessa (see n.21), rather than voicing original thoughts.

24. Eusebius, HE 1.13. Dobschütz, *Christusbilder*, loc. cit. (n.10), firmly believed that the Eusebian version was primary, and the ultimate source of all later ones, but see below. Eusebius does not tell us, as Procopius does, that Abgar suffered from gout either.
25. n.9 above. For his narrative of the Persian wars Evagrius's main source is in fact Procopius, but, not unnaturally for a church historian, he does add extra material on religious topics, e.g. at IV.26, where he draws on his own experience at Apamea as a boy and records that the miracle described by Procopius was later commemorated by an icon hung from the roof of the sanctuary of the church there; IV.28 on Sergiopolis, where again he knows more than Procopius; IV.23f.—three holy men of the reign of Justinian not mentioned by Procopius. It is not at all surprising that he should similarly have added the details about the Edessa image. In any case, Evagrius's interest here is not in the details of the siege, for which he is far inferior to Procopius, but in proving that God directed the outcome through the medium of the icon.
26. See Bauer, *op. cit.* (n.20), p.11 'a pure fabrication, without any connection with reality'.
27. *Peregrinatio Aetheriae*, 19 (ed. H. Pétré, *Sources chrétiennes* 21 (1948), pp.162—71).
28. Ed. G. Phillips, *The Doctrine of Addai the Apostle* (London, 1876), p.5 'when Hannan, the keeper of the archives, saw that Jesus spake thus to him, by virtue of being the king's painter, he took and painted a likeness of Jesus with choice paints, and brought it with him to Abgar the king, his master. And when Abgar the king saw the likeness, he received it with great joy and placed it with great honour in one of his palatial houses'. In a forthcoming article H. J. W. Drijvers suggests that the appearance of the motif of the portrait in the *Doctrina* should be explained as an answer to contemporary emphasis on portraits of Mani.
29. 'Suppression' by Eusebius: Runciman, *art. cit.* (n.11), p.241. But note that the sixth-seventh century Cairo and Bodleian papyri containing the Abgar story, which probably represent a Syriac original earlier than Eusebius, do not mention the portrait either (see R. Peppermüller, 'Griechische Papyrusfragmente der Doctrina Addai', *Vigiliae Christianae* 25 (1971), pp.289—301). Neither the papyri (which are part of the same original) nor the *Doctrina* refer to the letter either, only to an oral reply by Jesus. It is clear that the Eusebian version, with the letter of Abgar and the reply of Jesus, represents a stage when the legend was crystallising, and that the Syriac tradition was more complex than Dobschütz would admit. That it was possible, despite the *Doctrina*, to regard the image in the sixth century as an *acheiropoietos*, surely shows that neither Eusebius nor the *Doctrina* monopolised the field of 'origin' stories. Procopius may refer to the Eusebian version (BP II.11.26) but he certainly used other material (he refers to 'the Edessenes' at BP II.12.26) and it is by no means obvious, as Rubin assumed (*Prokopios von Kaisareia*, pp.41ff.) that he was in fact basing his narrative on the Eusebian text. All his section about Augustus's promise of a hippodrome to Edessa, for instance, is clearly a much later addition to the story—see John Humphrey, 'Prolegomena to the Study of the Hippodrome at Caesarea Maritima', *Bull. Am. Schools Oriental Research* 213 (1974), p.28.



30. *Acta Thaddaei*, 3 (R. A. Lipsius and M. Bonnet, eds., *Acta Apostolorum Apocrypha* I, Leipzig, 1891, p.274, trans. A. Walker, in A. Roberts and J. Donaldson, eds., *The Ante-Nicene Christian Library*, 16 *Apocryphal Gospels, Acts and Revelations*, Edinburgh, 1870, p.441). On the date, see n.50 below.
31. *De fide orthodoxa*, IV. 16. PG 94.1173; *De imaginibus*, I.27, *ibid.*, 1261. John's allusions, with the point that Ananias could not accomplish his task, whereupon Christ himself took the initiative and then gave the cloth to Ananias, are clearly an elaboration of the version of the Acts of Thaddaeus, as also are the iconophile references (n.32).
32. In a speech defending images before the iconoclast emperor Leo III (AD 717–41), quoted by George Monachus, *Chron.*, p.740 de Boor (2 vols., Leipzig, 1904), and compare p.321–16f. de Boor, which is closely similar to another iconophile text—the *Antirrhetikoi* of Nicephorus (AD 758–829) (see *Antirrhet.* III.42, PG 100.461A, and compare I.24, PG 100.260).
33. Segal, *Edessa*, p.215; Runciman, *art. cit.* (n.11), p.248. I am not sure however that the term only came in the tenth century from the Arabic, for the Greek word *mandylion*, from Latin *mantelium*, *mantele* meaning 'handkerchief' or 'face cloth' (TLL s.v.), was established as early as the sixth century, when John the Lydian glossed it as having this meaning—*De Mens.* I.12, ed. R. Wuensch, Leipzig, 1898. In a cosmopolitan milieu like that of Edessa it is hardly possible to say whether the term was first applied to the Image in its Greek or its Arabic form, but in my opinion the former is more likely (see n.34). The important point in either case is that *Mandylion* suggests a small cloth, and was surely applied to the Image because of the tradition in the Acts of Thaddaeus and elsewhere that it was a small towel with which Christ wiped his face.
34. Germanus (n.32) calls it a *soudarion*, the tenth-century *Narratio a cheiromaktron* (PG 113. 429D). See too the story in the late seventh-century work by John of Nikiu, *Chron.* 91: 'in this city (sc. Alexandria) there dwelt a Jew named Aubaruns (*sic*) and he had a chest in which there were the mandil and towel of our Lord Jesus Christ, wherewith He girded Himself when He washed the feet of His disciples . . .'. The chest was opened by the patriarch Timothy (517–35) and the mandil and towel placed in the Church of the Tabenniosites. See R. H. Charles, *The Chronicle of John, Bishop of Nikiu, translated from Zotenberg's Ethiopic text*, Text and Translation Society (London, 1916), pp.144–5. Whatever we make of this story (which was written in Greek, through it now survives only in Ethiopic translation), it indicates that 'mandylion' was early established as a Greek term.
35. See Wilson, *op. cit.* (n.3), pp.96f., 99ff., whose identification of the Shroud and the Mandylion depends heavily on the text of the *Acta Thaddaei* (n.30 above), where the word *tetradiplon* is used for the towel. This would indeed seem to support the idea that the cloth in question was 'folded in four', yet even so, the writer of the Acts clearly states that Christ merely 'wiped his face' on it. The other Greek texts already cited nearly always specifically say also that Christ's face, not his whole body, was transferred to the cloth.

36. Even if we followed the second version of the Image's origins given by the tenth-century *Narratio* (PG 113.432), as Wilson seems inclined to do (*op. cit.*, pp.96–7), whereby the image was formed when sweat dropped from Christ's face during the agony in the garden and someone handed him a cloth to wipe it with, the implication is still of an image of the face alone, and emanating from the living Christ. But in any case the second version in the *Narratio* is obviously a much later elaboration, and even the writer himself doubts its value.
37. For images in this period see especially E. Kitzinger, 'The Cult of Images in the Period before Iconoclasm' *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 8 (1954), pp.85–150. For government exploitation of these images see *art. cit.* (n.13), especially pp.18ff.
38. C. Mango, *The Brazen House. A Study of the Vestibule of the Imperial Palace of Constantinople* (Copenhagen, 1959), pp.108ff. Early icons: K. Weitzmann, M. Chatzidakis, K. Miatev and S. Radojic, *Frühe Ikonen* (Munich, 1965); M. Chatzidakis, 'An Encaustic Icon of Christ at Sinai', *The Art Bulletin* 49 (1967), pp.197–207.
39. Mango, *The Brazen House*, p.142f., and see B. N. Nelson and J. Starr 'The Legend of the Divine Surety and the Jewish Moneylender', *Annuaire de l'Institut de philologie et d'histoire orientales et slaves* 7 (1944), pp.289–338.
40. See *art. cit.* (n.13), p.20f. To the works there cited add M. Van Esbroek, 'Une chronique de Maurice à Héraclius dans un récit des sièges de Constantinople', *Bedi Kartlisa* 34 (1976), pp.74–96. It should be pointed out that as the Image of Edessa was still in Edessa in 626, it cannot have saved Constantinople in that year (so Grabar, *La Sainte Face*, p.31).
41. See *art. cit.* (n.13).
42. For this hymn see A. Grabar, 'La témoignage d'une hymne syriaque sur l'architecture de la cathédrale d'Edesse au VI<sup>e</sup> siècle et sur la symbolique de l'édifice chrétien', *Cahiers archéologiques* 2 (1974), pp.41ff., with earlier bibliography. For an English translation see C. Mango, *The Art of the Byzantine Empire 312–1453* (Englewood Cliffs, 1972), pp.57ff.
43. For the flood and rebuilding, see Kirsten, *art. cit.* (n.10), pp.155ff. For the (orthodox) church and its decoration see the excellent discussion by Marlia Mundell, 'Monophysite Church Decoration', in A. A. Bryer and J. Herrin (eds.), *Iconoclasm* (Birmingham, 1977), pp.59–74, especially p.65.
44. *Art. cit.* (n.42).
45. See the forthcoming paper by Kathleen MacVey (which the author kindly showed me), which sets the hymn in a Syriac, rather than a Greek, context.
46. For the symbolism cf. Corippus, *Iust.* IV. 290ff., with commentary in Averil Cameron (ed.), *Flavius Cresconius Corippus, In laudem Iustini Augusti minoris libri IV* (London, 1976), pp.206–7. Amazonius's bishopric: AD 553–560, according to Jacob of Edessa, translated E. W.



Brooks, *CSCO Script. Syri* III. iv (Paris, 1905), p.243. He was at the fifth ecumenical council in Constantinople in AD 553—Michael the Syrian, *Chron.* IX.29, trans. Chabot, II.ii (Paris, 1902), p.246. If these dates are right, and if Procopius's *Buildings* dates from AD 554 (see E. Stein, *Histoire du Bas-Empire* II, Amsterdam, 1949, Appendix V, p.837), it would seem that we have a clear date of 554/4 for the rebuilding of the church.

47. The meaning 'imprinted with', 'set with', advocated by Goussen (*Le Muséon* 38 (1925), pp.117—36) seems far better attested for the Syriac term *teveā* (see C. Brockelmann, *Lexicon Syriacum*, 2nd ed., 1928, p.267), yet it is hard to accept on grounds of interpretation; the meaning 'like', accepted by Mango, *Art of the Byzantine Empire*, p.58, from A. Dupont-Sommer, *Cahiers archéologiques* 2 (1947), pp.29—39, fits far better into the form of the hymn, which here (vv.4ff.) takes the form of a 'sequence' of comparisons. But both Sebastian Brock and H. J. W. Drijvers tell me that 'imprinted with' (also accepted by Segal, *Edessa*, p.189) is the more obvious translation. See however Mundell, *art. cit.* (n.43), p.65, suggesting that on the whole major icons were not usually kept permanently on view in churches.
48. PG 113. 437A, 440B, 444A, D. The vocabulary of cloth—424A, 425A, 429D, 432B, D, 433A, 436A etc.
49. Michael the Syrian, *Chron.* XI.16, trans. Chabot, II.iii (Paris, 1904), pp.475ff., from Dionysius of Tell-Mahré, who got it from his grandfather, Symeon of the Tur-Abdin.
50. PG 113.445C (and see too 444A-C).
51. Walker, in his translation (intro, p.xix), merely says 'probably of the sixth or seventh century' (see n.30 above). There is no dating criterion to warrant Wilson's certainty (*op. cit.*, p.99) that this is a sixth-century text.
52. In support of the idea that there was in fact no change in the Image itself after the sixth century, when it first emerged as an *acheiropoietos*, but that the belief that it was a Veronica crystallised in the seventh-eighth centuries, one may cite the description of the Image in Baldwin II's list of AD 1239 (n.70 below), where it is called *toella tabule inserta*, and the fact that we know from the *Narratio* (PG 113. 437A) that it was stretched on a board, i.e. that it had the appearance of an icon. I suggest that if painted copies could be plausibly made of it whether in the eighth or the tenth centuries, it probably always looked like a very old icon, heavily painted and dark, and that we cannot possibly know now whether it ever was a cloth at all. See too Runciman, *art. cit.* (n.11), p.245.
53. PG 113.437.
54. For all this see E. Honigmann, *Évêques et évêchés monophysites d'Asie antérieure au VI<sup>e</sup> siècle*, *CSCO Subsidia* 2 (Louvain, 1951); W. H. C. Frend, *The Rise of the Monophysite Movement* (Cambridge, 1972), pp.283ff.

55. John of Ephesus, *Lives of the Eastern Saints*, trans. E. W. Brooks, *Patrologia Orientalis* 19.ii (Paris, 1925), pp.153—58, and see now Susan Ashbrook, 'Syriac Hagiography: an emporium of cultural influences', in J. H. Eaton (ed.), *Horizons in Semitic Studies* (Birmingham, 1980), pp.59—68. Jacob's ordinations: John of Ephesus, *op. cit.*, pp.157—8.
56. For all this see R. Devréesse, *Le patriarcat d'Antioche depuis la paix de l'église jusqu'à la conquête arabe* (Paris, 1945), p.293, based on Michael the Syrian, *Chron.* X.23, XI.3.
57. Dobschütz, *Christusbilder*, p.117; Runciman, *art. cit.* (n.11), p.244. But it seems unnecessary to accept Dobschütz's further suggestion that the icon originated in circles with connections with Constantinople. There was no attempt to remove it to the capital at this period, as was done with the image of Camuliana (see n.37 above), nor indeed any sign that it was known at the capital before the eighth century.
58. The icon was not known to the author of the Chronicle of Edessa, written soon after 544 (ed. I. Guidi, *CSCO Script. Syri* III.xiv.1 (Paris, 1903), trans., p.11: Chosroes retreated from Edessa, *Dei eam protegentis gratia*—but no mention of an image. For the chronicle see L. Hallier, *Untersuchungen über die edessenische Chronik* (Leipzig, 1893). Edward Gibbon had the right instincts—see his unforgettable chapter on the rise of images (*Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, ed. J. B. Bury, V, 2nd edition (1901), pp.247—48).
59. PG 113. 438B. Just as there were two parallel versions by now of the origins of the image—*ibid* 429D—435A (see n.36 above).
60. And why, when the universal tradition about the Mandyion was that it bore the imprint of Christ's face, taken during his lifetime, should anyone have thought that it might really be a full-length shroud?
61. PG 113. 437A.
62. K. Weitzmann, 'The Mandyion and Constantine Porphyrogenetos', *Cahiers archéologiques* 11 (1960), pp.163—84.
63. Greek Patr. Cod. 35, p.286, published and discussed by Weitzmann, *art. cit.*, pp.168—9.
64. Madrid, Cod. 5.3, n.2, fol. 131r (Weitzmann, *art. cit.*, fig. 20). For the date and provenance of the MS. see Nigel Wilson, 'The Madrid Scylitzes', *Scrittura e Civiltà* 2 (1978), pp.209—19.
65. Grabar, *La Sainte Face*, pp.24ff.—as of course with the Holy Face of Laon itself. Grabar emphasises that from now on it ranks as one of 'les plus importants symboles de la décoration byzantine' (p.28). Had it really been shown to be a shroud and thus quite different from what everyone had believed it to be, the news would have caused a sensation.
66. Wilson, *op. cit.*, pp.133ff., especially 144f.
67. Especially P. Vignon, *Le Saint Suaire de Turin devant la science, l'archéologie, l'histoire, l'iconographie, la légende* (1937).



68. For an introduction to which see Chatzidakis, *art. cit.* (n.38); E. Kitzinger, *Byzantine Art in the Making* (Cambridge, Mass., 1977), p.120f. (on the Sinai Pantokrator, against Weitzmann); J. D. Breckenridge, *The Numismatic Iconography of Justinian II* (New York, 1959), pp.91ff.
69. For a discussion of possible references to a, or the, shroud before the fourteenth century see Maurus Green, 'Enshrouded in Silence', *Ampleforth Journal* 74 (1969), pp.319—45.
70. Runciman, *art. cit.* (n.11), pp.251—2. Text: Comte de Riant, *Exuviae sacrae Constantinopolitanae II* (Geneva, 1878), pp.134—5.
71. See Wilson, *op. cit.*, pp.186ff. Lirey was in the diocese of Troyes, whose bishop wrote in 1389 a lengthy document to the then Pope declaring that about thirty years earlier a previous bishop had extracted a confession from a man who said he had painted the image on the Shroud. The bishop was told to be silent on pain of excommunication. Ulysse Chevalier denounced the Shroud on this basis in a classic treatment (*Etude critique sur l'origine du Sainte Suaire de Lirey-Chambéry*, Paris, 1900).
72. A Heisenberg, *Nikolaos Mesarites, Die Palästrevolution des Johannes Comnenos* (Würzburg, 1907), pp.29ff. Mesarites was the keeper of the relics and had occasion to describe the collection precisely in AD 1201. In 1201, therefore, there were two distinct objects relevant to us in the Pharos—the Mandyion and a burial cloth.
73. Robert of Clari, *The Conquest of Constantinople*, trans. E. H. McNeal, (New York, 1936), p.112. According to Robert, this *sydoine* (*sydon*) bore the image of Christ—though the language of the text leaves it strictly ambiguous as to whether it refers to the face or the whole body. Were this to be the Mandyion, we would have to suppose not only that between 1201 and 1204 the revelation took place, but also that the object was transferred to Blachernae, besides explaining what is meant by *toella* in the document of Baldwin II if not the Mandyion.
74. See e.g. Walsh, *op. cit.* (n.1), pp.33—34.
75. Wilson, *op. cit.*, p.146. And since Robert also refers in his description of the Pharos chapel to the Mandyion, we have to suppose that a copy had been substituted (and therefore, presumably, that this was Baldwin's *toella*).
76. Wilson, *loc. cit.*
77. (n.64) above.
78. For the relics in the Pharos chapel see R. Janin, *La géographie ecclésiastique de l'empire byzantin*, I.iii: *les églises et les monastères*, 2nd ed. (Paris, 1969), pp.234—5, and, besides Mesarites, Antony of Novgorod, ed. B. de Khitrowo, *Itinéraires russes en Orient* (Geneva, 1889), pp.97—98. Antony was a Russian pilgrim in Constantinople in 1200.

79. For published recent information see Peter Jennings (ed.), *Face to Face with the Turin Shroud* (Great Wakering, Essex and Oxford, 1978). Results are said to be expected soon, but in the meantime one has to depend on 'leaks' and newspaper reports (e.g. *New York Times*, 13th October 1979). It is said that the use of paint has been ruled out, but even so, it is not yet clear that all versions of the vapour and contact theories proposed by Vignon and others are ruled out also (see Walsh, *op. cit.*, pp.45ff). We are still waiting for a carbon-14 dating, which alone might be able to settle definitely the question of whether the Shroud could be of the first century AD. It was correctly emphasised by C. Albizzati in 1941 that all such 'scientific' questions such as the nature of the image etc., however imposing they may seem to the layman, are strictly secondary to the basic problem of whether the Shroud could possibly be an ancient object ('Tre Casi Insigne' *Athenaeum*, n.s. 19 (1941), 59ff., especially pp.64—67, a reference which I owe to Professor Momigliano). Among the difficulties which Albizzati saw were the coy posture of the hands which one might attribute to pious modesty, and the failure of the Shroud to conform to the conventions of ancient burial practice.

These arguments apply equally forcefully to recent claims to have detected a coin of Pontius Pilate placed on the eyes of the figure represented.

80. A photographic effect produced by heat has been suggested, but not proven (indeed, it is hard to see how it could be proved).
81. C. Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures* (New York, 1973), pp.3—32: 'Thick description: towards an interpretative theory of culture'.
82. Implied by Kitzinger, *art. cit.* (n.37); for a critique, see P. Brown, 'A Dark-Age Crisis: Aspects of the Iconoclastic Controversy', *Eng. Hist. Rev.* 88 (1973), pp.1—34. Arnaldo Momigliano in a lecture given in 1970 had already elegantly scotched such notions ('Popular Religious beliefs and the late Roman Historians', *Studies in Church History* 8 (1971), pp.1—18).
83. M. Foucault, *The History of Sexuality, I: An Introduction* (Eng. trans., London, 1978).
84. So that the publication of Albizzati's paper (n.79), which as he explains had been intended for a conference on the Shroud held in Turin in 1939 but which he had felt unable to give there because of the restrictions placed upon the participants, was a brave act by the author himself and the editor of the journal, P. Fraccaro. Pressure too was placed upon the author of the article *Sindone* in the *Enciclopedia Italiana*.

Note: I should like to thank several friends for answering my queries, especially (besides those already mentioned in the notes) Michael Cook and Robin Cormack.



## VI

### CORIPPUS' POEM ON JUSTIN II: A TERMINUS OF ANTIQUE ART? \*

In the second of two classic articles Miss Toynbee referred to the figure of Constantinople on the solidi of Justin II in these concluding words: 'we have now reached the terminus of antique art'<sup>1</sup>. Constantinople is shown in familiar guise as Roma — the New Rome, helmeted and armed, the embodiment, it would seem, of the classical roots of Byzantine ideology. Yet a contemporary tells us that people took the figure for Aphrodite<sup>2</sup>, and in the next reign it was replaced by the Cross<sup>3</sup>. Despite the lack of sources for its internal history, the reign of Justinian's nephew and successor, Justin II (565-578), has already been seen to mark a turning point in Byzantine religious and artistic life. Here can be seen in an acute form the dichotomy between classicism and 'Byzantinism' which has caused such problems of interpretation for modern scholars<sup>4</sup>. On the one hand the emperor a man renowned for his piety<sup>5</sup>, encouraged a religious atmosphere in which icon worship could take root. Far from economising, moreover, in the difficult years after Justinian's death, he was an energetic patron: several of the small number of art works surviving from the period between Justinian

\* A version of this paper was delivered before the Oxford Philological Society in February, 1971. I should also like to thank Professor F.R.D. Goodyear for salutary comments.

<sup>1</sup> J. M. C. TOYNBEE, *Roma and Constantinopolis in late antique art from 365 to Justin II*, 'Studies presented to David Moore Robinson', 1953, II, 277; cf. also *Roma and Constantinopolis in late antique art from 312 to 365*, JHS, XXXVII, 1947, 12 ff. C. C. VERMEULE, *The Goddess Roma in the Art of the Roman Empire*, Cambridge Mass. 1959, 48, takes the figure to be Roma.

<sup>2</sup> JOH. EPH., HE, 3, 14 (trans. Payne Smith).

<sup>3</sup> E.G. W. WROTH, *Catalogue of the Imperial Byzantine Coins in the British Museum*, London 1908, I, 105, 107.

<sup>4</sup> See below.

<sup>5</sup> See E. KITZINGER, *The Cult of Images in the Period before Iconoclasm*, DOP, VIII, 1954, 83 ff., esp. 126 f. Below, n. 168.

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and Heraclius can definitely be assigned to his reign, and we know from literary sources of other works sponsored by him, both religious and secular. Further, two of the most notable surviving works, the Cross which Justin sent to Rome<sup>6</sup> and the Stuma paten<sup>7</sup>, particularly well illustrate the new linear and abstract style especially connected with religious art<sup>8</sup>. Yet it was this same emperor who placed Constantinople on his coins and revived the traditionally Roman ceremonial of the consulship, celebrating his own holding of that office with a spectacular statue of himself in consular dress<sup>9</sup>. It was Justin II, not his successors Tiberius II and Maurice, for whom there is merely better evidence, who reintroduced consular themes into Imperial iconography<sup>10</sup>.

This combination of the traditional and the new, then, that can be seen in the art of Justin II's reign marks it as a key moment in a period which poses great problems for the art historian. Because of the paucity of surviving material and the consequent difficulty of assigning dates on stylistic grounds to such undated works as do survive, it is extremely hard to account for the coexistence of classicising and linear ('Byzantine') styles in the period before Iconoclasm. Was there a *renovatio* of classical subjects and themes during Justinian's reign?<sup>11</sup> Do the two styles correspond to secular and religious subjects respectively?<sup>12</sup> Or should the classicising objects be assigned to metropolitan workshops, the linear style to provincial taste?<sup>13</sup> The striking coexistence of both

<sup>6</sup> H. PIERCE and R. TYLER, *L'Art byzantin*, 1932, I, pls. 136, 199 b; E. KITZINGER, *Byzantine Art in the Period between Justinian and Iconoclasm*, in 'Berichte zum XI Internationalen Byzantinisten-Kongress', Munich 1958, 18, Plate 1 b).

<sup>7</sup> PIERCE and TYLER, pl. 140, 111 ff., 114 ff.; Kitzinger, *l.c.* Cf. plate IV a).

<sup>8</sup> See Kitzinger's important survey (n. 6, referred to henceforth as 'Berichte').

<sup>9</sup> See *Anth. Plan.*, 72.

<sup>10</sup> For Tiberius and Maurice see M. ROSS, *A Byzantine Gold Medallion at Dunbarton Oaks*, DOP, XI, 1957, 247 ff. For Justin, see below, 145 f. No consular medallions or coins survive from Justin's reign, but there were surely medallions at least — cf. Corippus, *Just.*, 4, 109 f.; for possible traces of one see ROSS, *art. cit.*, 256.

<sup>11</sup> See esp. KITZINGER, *Mosaic Pavements in the Greek East and the question of a 'Renaissance' under Justinian*, in 'Actes du VIe Congrès international des études byzantines', Paris, 1948, II, 1951, 209 ff.; also G. DOWNEY, *Justinian as Achilles*, TAPA, LXXI, 1940, 68 ff. J. BECKWITH, *The Art of Constantinople*, 2nd ed., 1968, 37 ff., 40, 45, accepts the idea of a Justinianic revival.

<sup>12</sup> KITZINGER, *Berichte*, esp. 39 f.

<sup>13</sup> K. WEITZMANN, *Das klassische Erbe in der Kunst Konstantinopels*,

styles in a single Justinianic mosaic<sup>14</sup> and the likelihood that similarly 'mixed' mosaics from Thessaloniki should be dated as early as the late fifth century<sup>15</sup> make it difficult to see these phenomena in terms of a stylistic progression from classical to linear renderings. But at the same time the mixture of Roman and 'Byzantine' motifs in the art of Justin II's reign becomes easier to understand when seen against this background.

The purpose of this paper is to bring to bear on these questions the evidence of a remarkable and hitherto neglected text — Corippus' poem in four books of Latin hexameters on Justin's accession and entry to his first consulship<sup>16</sup>. The poem *In laudem Iustini minoris* in fact makes a modest contribution to the meagre materials for the art history of this period by describing several lost art works. Their iconography, if not their style, can be deduced from Corippus' descriptions. But in a more general sense too — and this is more important — the poem gives us a unique insight into the frame of mind which could encompass both the naturalistic image and the symbol with no sense of incongruity, an attitude which could accept what seem to us to be disparate elements and see them as part of a coherent whole. To anticipate my conclusion, therefore, I would suggest that a study of this poem, which constantly draws on the themes and patterns of visual art, can point the way to a different assessment of the problems of artistic style in the period from Justinian to Heraclius — an assessment which is not based purely on stylistic criteria but which looks rather to the changing mental attitudes of the time.

In the present state of scholarly disagreement on stylistic

Alte und Neue Kunst, III, 1954, 41 ff. (= *The Classical Heritage in the Art of Constantinople*, Studies in Classical and Byzantine Manuscript Illumination, 1971, 126 ff., with bibliography). There is a fundamental disagreement between Weitzmann and Kitzinger ('Berichte'), the former attributing the classical style to Constantinopolitan workshops, the latter seeing the capital as the centre of the new linear style.

<sup>14</sup> K. WEITZMANN, *The Mosaic in St. Catherine's Monastery on Mt. Sinai*, Proc. Am. Philosoph. Society, CX, 1966, 392 ff.

<sup>15</sup> R. CORMACK, *The Mosaic Decoration of S. Demetrios, Thessalonika*, ABSA, LIV, 1969, 17 ff.

<sup>16</sup> *In laudem Iustini Augusti minoris libri IV*, ed. J. Partsch, *Mon. ant.* III, 2, Berlin 1879; M. PETSCHENIG, *Berliner Studien*, IV, 1886. Since writing this I have received Corippo. *In laudem Iustini*. Introd., testo, traduzione e annotazioni a cura di D. Romano, Palermo 1970.



development in Byzantine art before Iconoclasm we cannot neglect such literary testimony as we have. Corippus's poem can make a further, more specific, contribution to the debate by showing that the Imperial ceremonial, and thence surely Imperial art, which has been strangely neglected in this controversy<sup>17</sup>, was as much charged with hidden meanings and symbols as any religious ritual. The mode of thought which encouraged a linear and abstract artistic style to develop was already present even behind the Roman themes of Imperial iconography, for these very Roman themes were inextricably mingled in the minds of contemporaries with the Byzantine conception of the Christ-loving emperor. And it was Justin II who, as we shall see, united a revival of traditionally Roman Imperial ceremonies with a new and passionate pietism. In describing, often in visual imagery, the scenes of the Imperial accession and coronation, Corippus shows us a total unity of treatment of both Imperial and religious themes which shows that the idea of a strict dichotomy of style in the visual arts according to genre is unlikely to be a sufficient explanation in itself. The emperor was not merely the victorious triumphator of Roman tradition<sup>18</sup> but also the servant and image of Christ<sup>19</sup>: thus Imperial art is uniquely capable of showing us the relation between the two modes — the extrovert, naturalistic classical style and the inward looking, symbolic 'Byzantinism' which was to prevail. Like the distinction of genre<sup>20</sup>, the theory of a basic divergence between metropolitan and provincial taste will be seen to be over-rigid, for here is a poet writing not merely in Constantinople but for the court itself in exactly the symbolic and allusive manner which, while owing little to literary rhetoric, corresponds exactly to the other-worldliness of the linear style of visual art.

Neither strictly epic nor panegyric<sup>21</sup>, Corippus' poem

<sup>17</sup> For the subject, see A. GRABAR, *L'Empereur dans l'art byzantin*, Paris 1936.

<sup>18</sup> See J. GAGÉ, *Σταυρὸς νικητοῦς. La Victoire impériale dans l'empire chrétien*, *Rev. d'hist. et de philosophie religieuses*, XIII, 1933, 370 ff.

<sup>19</sup> JUSTIN., 2, 29 f.

<sup>20</sup> Though that is indeed partly true — see below.

<sup>21</sup> For the form, see TH. NISSEN, *Historisches Epos und Panegyrikos in der Spätantike*, *Hermes*, LXXV, 1940, 298 ff. Cf. also O. MURRAY, *Panegyric and Advice to Rulers in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages* (forthcoming).

cannot be easily classified in literary terms. What it does in fact is to describe in careful detail the ceremonial of accession and of entry to the consulship (though the latter part in unfinished). This description is not rhetorical but pictorial and symbolic: that is, the poet has in mind all the time not only the visual splendours of actual court ceremonial but also the familiar art works which showed just the scene he is describing, and this is what makes it so useful for the art historian. Whether or not he brings this freshness to his theme because he is himself an outsider to the formal life of the capital<sup>22</sup>, being merely an African grammaticus in origin, Corippus has in fact given us the perfect key to Imperial art and its ideology, very little obscured by the usual flourishes of rhetoric. Indeed, the style of the poem is plain to the point of banality: it is the subject matter, with its characteristically Byzantine combination of direct observation and reference to a complex system of inner meanings, that is so rich.

Corippus' poem is itself a ceremonial production, as much so as the funeral vestment which the new Empress Sophia produced for the dead Emperor Justinian, heavily ornamented with scenes of Imperial triumph<sup>23</sup>. So much so indeed that the poet can refer to his work (which covers only the first few weeks of the reign) as narrating « the holy triumphs of the unconquered princeps »<sup>24</sup>. And the effect of the work is to set Justin within a framework of Byzantine Imperial ideology, a framework which is conceived and presented pictorially in a series of scenes closely related to the works of contemporary visual art. My concern here is not then with the *In Laudem Justinii* as a late and inferior example of Latin narrative poetry. That may be a more appropriate approach for the *Johannis*, Corippus' one other poem, a tedious account of the exploits of John Troglita and very different from the *In Laudem Justinii* in scope and indeed in date<sup>25</sup>. But though there are certainly many verbal debts to both classical

<sup>22</sup> I owe this suggestion to Professor A. Momigliano.

<sup>23</sup> JUST., 1, 276 f.

<sup>24</sup> JUST., *Pan. Anast.* 50-51 « sacrosque triumphos / Principis aethiops carmine dicam ».

<sup>25</sup> ed. J. DIGGLE and F. R. D. GOODYEAR, 1970 (Cambridge). The *Johannis* consists of eight books of epic narrative dealing with events in Africa in the 540's and composed soon after the events.



and Christian poets in the panegyric<sup>26</sup>, its interest lies in its originality. Preserving on the whole a secular appearance — the Old Testament analogies so beloved of contemporary artists and writers are totally absent<sup>27</sup> — it fulfils the functions of panegyric in a new way, by giving us word pictures of Byzantine court life, by showing the Imperial ideology translated into action<sup>28</sup>. These pictures, with their 'hidden meanings'<sup>29</sup>, show Justin, whose accession by Corippus' own admission needed the reinforcement of the Palace by massive detachments of guards, followed by the murder of a rival<sup>30</sup>, taking his place with no sense of awkwardness as the central figure in a hierarchy which embraced heaven as well as earth. Corippus' method, I suggest, is not the method of argument at all, but that of demonstration; the rhetoric of literature gives way before the rhetoric of visual art.

In what sense therefore can Corippus help towards an understanding of transition from 'classical' to 'Byzantine' art which is undoubtedly taking place between the reign of Justinian and Heraclius? First, he simply tells us of several minor art works otherwise unattested, for example Justinian's funeral vestment<sup>31</sup>. Then he patterns other parts of his narrative on visual representations of similar themes<sup>32</sup>, and then again he invests the whole poem with symbolism and imagery closely relevant to visual art and often exemplified in known art works<sup>33</sup>. For obvious reasons Corippus' information will be mainly concerned with Imperial themes, and even within this limited field he emphasises the Roman subjects — triumph, victory, consulship. Yet this too is an important fact, for it clearly reflects Justin's own preoccupations, espe-

<sup>26</sup> Collected by R. AMANN, *De Corippo priorum poetarum latinorum imitatore*. Diss. Oldenburg 1885, 1888.

<sup>27</sup> Below, 164.

<sup>28</sup> There were some precedents, but no-one had taken it so far. See ALAN CAMERON, *Claudian*, 1970, 270 ff.; L. B. WARREN, *PP*, XIX, 1964, 420; R. MACMULLEN, *The Art Bulletin*, XLVI, 1964, 440 ff.

<sup>29</sup> See G. MATHEW, *Byzantine Aesthetics*, London 1963, 38 ff.; below 161 f. <sup>30</sup> EVAGRIUS, *HE* V, 1 f.; JOH. EPH., *HE* II, 10. Cf. JUST., I, 208. For the death of Justin, son of GERMANUS, see EVAGRIUS, V, 2; JOH. ANTIOCH., fr. 217 b (*FHG* V, 35); JOH. BICLAR., a. 568.

<sup>31</sup> JUST., I, 276 f. See 140 f. below.

<sup>32</sup> E.g. the preface, below, 142 f.

<sup>33</sup> Below, 146 f.

cially his desire to present himself (however implausibly) in the guise of Justinian the warrior. And here too Corippus' treatment may lead us to refine Grabar's view that a separation between religious and Imperial art could still at this point be perceived<sup>34</sup>. For one of the most striking features of the poem is the close interlocking of religious and Imperial elements; Roman themes might be cultivated, and enjoy a vogue, but the emperor is at all times the servant of God, the φιλόχριστος βασιλεύς. In the poem political and religious imagery interacts with the utilisation of artistic *topoi* to form a homogeneous whole; insofar as this conception of the role of the emperor within the wider religious and political context underlies more fully developed Byzantine art, Corippus' poem shows that the ground was prepared when Justin came to the throne.

The methods used by Corippus are the same throughout the work, even though Book IV, an unfinished description of Justin's inauguration as consul on January 1st, 566, was added to the earlier books at a later stage<sup>35</sup>. Books I-III, on the other hand, which cover Justin's accession on November 14th, 565, and the reception of the Avar embassy on the seventh day of his reign<sup>36</sup>, must have followed very closely on the events they describe, if they were to have maximum impact<sup>37</sup>. Indeed, the recitation of panegyrics in both Latin and Greek was a part of the consular ceremonies<sup>38</sup>, so that some such works at any rate were quickly composed in time for Justin's own inauguration, though it would perhaps be unwise to suppose that Corippus' was among them. For our purpose now, however, the significant point is that the poet uses exactly the same technique in all four books. A brief summary of contents might be helpful here:

<sup>34</sup> A. GRABAR, *L'Iconoclasme byzantin*, Paris 1957, 23.

<sup>35</sup> Cf. 3, 404 «Haec dilata parum, non praetereunda relinquo». Not much later, however, and certainly before Justin's second consulship in 568. See Byzantion, XXXVII, 1967, 12 ff.

<sup>36</sup> JUST., 3, 151 ff.

<sup>37</sup> I, 60-61 (n. 158 below) probably refer to the conspiracy of Artabanes and Addaeus, dated by Theophanes (AM 159) to 566-7. Evagrius 5 suggests that it took place early in the year.

<sup>38</sup> JUST., 4, 154 f.

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## Preface

Il.

- 1-48: addressed to the Emperor, describing his power and dominions and asking for his favour.

## Panegyricus

Il.

- 1-51: addressed to the *quaestor* and *magister* Anastasius.

## Book I

Il.

- 1-27: introduction. Corippus' patrons.

Il.

- 27-8: (lacuna containing an account of the death of Justinian).

Il.

- 28-65: Justin's dream, foretelling his accession.

Il.

- 66-186: Callinicus and a group of senators come to Justin's palace to offer him the throne. He eventually accepts.

Il.

- 187-293: Justin and Sophia go to the Great Palace and mourn over the body of Justinian. 274 ff.: Sophia brings the embroidered funeral vestment.

Il.

- 294-313: *Fama* flies through the city.

Il.

- 314-367: Scene in the Hippodrome as the people gather in expectation.

## Book II

Il.

- 1-46: Justin goes to pray in church of the Archangel.

Il.

- 47-83: Sophia goes to pray in church of the Virgin.

Il.

- 84-174: Robing and crowning of Justin (inside the Palace). Acclamations of senate.

Il.

- 175-277: Justin's coronation speech.

Il.

- 278-430: Justin shows himself to the people in the Hippodrome.

## Book III

Il.

- 1-61: Funeral of Justinian and procession to the Church of the Holy Apostles.

Il.

- 62-84: Joy of populace at Justin's accession.

Il.

- 85-150: Coronation banquet.

Il.

- 151-407: Avar embassy — its reception by Justin on the seventh day of his reign.

## Book IV

Il.

- 1-89: Preparations for consular inauguration.

Il.

- 90-205: January 1st (566). Consular largesse to senate and officials (inside Palace).

Il.

- 206-263: Consular *processus*.

Il.

- 264-325: Justin goes to St. Sophia to give thanks.

Il.

- 326-377: Justin sits on curule chair, surrounded by highest officials... (unfinished).

We can now look at the poem in detail<sup>38</sup>. The simplest method which Corippus uses is that of straightforward *ekphrasis* — the description of a work of art.<sup>39</sup> The symbolism inherent in the object described can then lend its own resonances to the poem. Three passages in particular will illustrate this.

(a) In the third book, as part of the account of the Avar embassy and its reception, or rather rejection, by Justin, Corippus describes Justin's throne<sup>40</sup>. It is covered by a canopy of gold like the canopy of heaven (*simulans convexi climata caeli*), with a column at each corner and on either side a winged victory holding out a laurel crown. The ideology is obvious: the canopy of heaven over the emperor's head signifies his subordination to God, yet he is represented as the embodiment of human triumph, symbolised by the classical victories. Now Corippus has in fact given us a most valuable contribution to the old problem of the significance of canopied thrones<sup>41</sup>. Furthermore, two famous Imperial

<sup>38</sup> More detailed exposition of what follows will be found in my forthcoming commentary, London 1976.

<sup>39</sup> For examples see in the first place P. FRIEDLÄNDER, *Johannes von Gaza und Paulus Silentarius*, 1912; further, O. WULF, *Das Raumerlebnis des Naos im Spiegel der Ekphrasis*, BZ, XXX, 1930, 531 ff.; E. KITZINGER, *The Hellenistic Heritage in Byzantine Art*, DOP, XVII, 1965, 110; G. DOWNEY, s.v. *Ekphrasis*, RAC, IV, 1959.

<sup>40</sup> JUST., 3, 191 f.

<sup>41</sup> See notably A. ALFÖLDI, *Insignien und Tracht der römischen Kaiser*, MDAI (R), I, 1935, 127 ff.; H. P. L'ORANGE, *Studies on the Iconography of Cosmic Kingship*, Oslo 1953, 134 ff.; O. TREITINGER, *Die oströmische Kaiser- und Reichsidee von oströmischen Staats- und Reichsgedanken*, 2nd ed., Darmstadt 1956, 56 f.

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diptychs now in Florence and Vienna perfectly illustrate the type of throne described. An empress, variously identified as Ariadne or as Constantina, wife of Maurice, is shown on a very similar canopied throne<sup>42</sup>. If the later date for these diptychs is stylistically possible, which is perhaps doubtful, the empress might as well be Sophia as Constantina; one of the most striking motifs of Justin's coins is that of the Imperial couple enthroned, while the emperor in consular dress on the empress' *tablion* could just as well be Justin as Maurice, for it was Justin who brought back the consular ceremonial. Yet the throne in the diptychs is supported by eagles, not victories. The question of realism is thus raised. Is Corippus' throne description (and with it the other passages which I shall discuss later) meant as a realistic account of an actual object? Doubts might be raised in view of literary precedent<sup>43</sup>, but in the context of the very realistic and non-rhetorical character of the poem as a whole I should myself be inclined to take this and the other passages at face value. If that is justified, we have a perfect context for our two diptychs and a useful testimony to an artefact otherwise unknown.

The function of this ekphrastic passage within the poem itself is also clear: it reinforces the twin conceptions fundamental to Corippus' presentation of Justin, the emperor as conqueror and the emperor as subject to God. Moreover, the whole passage is embodied in another set piece, larger and less static — the scene where Justin receives and haughtily rejects an Avar embassy demanding further subsidies from Byzantium. The first important political action of the reign, this denial of Justinian's precedent set the tone for Justin's future policies<sup>44</sup>. It caught the imagination of contemporaries<sup>45</sup>, and not surprisingly, for the Avars themselves

<sup>42</sup> R. DELBRUECK, *Die Consulardiptychen und verwandte Denkmäler*, 1929, nos. 51 and 52. Constantina: GRABAR, *L'Empereur*, 13. Further bibliography: BECKWITH, *o.c.* (n. 11), 158, n. 52. See plate 1a).

<sup>43</sup> Claudian goes to the lengths of describing the scene of Maria's parturition as depicted on Stilicho's consular robe at a time when her pregnancy was no more than rumour (*Stil.*, 2, 341 f., see CAMERON, *Claudian*, 153.).

<sup>44</sup> For Justin's aggressive foreign policy see MENANDER PROTECTOR, fr. 28; JON. EPH., *HE*, 6, 24. See E. STEIN, *Studien zur Geschichte des byzantinischen Reiches*, Stuttgart 1919, 4 f.

<sup>45</sup> *Anth. Plan.*, 72, on which see BICS, XIII, 1966, 101 f.

had caused a sensation on their first arrival in Byzantium, with their long unkempt hair and wild looks. Corippus understandably emphasises this aspect — they are like tigers being led into the Hippodrome as they set foot in the Great Consistory, looking suspiciously around at first, then quelled by the majesty of what they see and falling flat in adoration before the Imperial throne<sup>46</sup>. After this token submission the long and arrogant speech which Corippus puts into the mouths of the envoys must fall rather flat<sup>47</sup>; yet they are bound to say something of the kind, for the contrast between the 'wild' barbarians and the 'tranquil' emperor (on which more later) is built in to the presentation of the whole scene, and each side is foredestined to move in certain fixed ceremonial ways. The envoys are under as much obligation to be 'wild' as the emperor is to be *tranquillus* and *serenus*; on each side these are fixed roles to be played out.

Although the scene has a certain life and vitality, therefore, it is actually a presentation of a favourite Byzantine theme. The Palace is shown as the microcosm of heaven<sup>48</sup>, with its serried ranks of Imperial officials and guards<sup>49</sup> (*imitatur Olympum / officiis Augusta domus*). The emperor's speech contains the first explicit declaration of a theme ubiquitous in later Byzantine political thought, the idea of Byzantium as guarded by God — '*res romana Dei est, terrenis non eget armis*'<sup>50</sup>. In this setting the emperor is the embodiment of order and peace in the world, in contrast with the uncivilised wildness of barbarians, a juxtaposition which is fundamental to Imperial art and to which I shall return. In the meantime we can see how well this passage illustrates Corippus' manner of blending simple descriptive detail with symbolic language so that the whole produces a unified effect. Words like *tranquillus*, *serenus*, *placidus*, *clemens* are all applied to the emperor throughout the poem, but here above all their underlying symbolism is made explicit. They are not merely inept repetitions by an inferior poet; they are the Latin equivalents of contemporary Greek usages found,

<sup>46</sup> JUST., 3, 246 f.

<sup>47</sup> 3, 271 f., For the whole of this cf. MENANDER, fr. 28.

<sup>48</sup> 3, 179 f., 244; 4, 102.

<sup>49</sup> 3, 157 f.

<sup>50</sup> 3, 333.

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for example, in Paul the Silentiary's *ekphrasis* on Hagia Sophia as well as in epigrams, where they fulfil much the same function. One of the technical terms in this sense is γαλήνη, the emperor's hieratic calm which brings order and serenity to the world<sup>51</sup>. So γαλήνωτατος becomes a regular Imperial title; and as the emperor expresses his γαλήνη by a calm smile, so when Justin shows himself, crowned, in the Imperial Box in the Hippodrome, Corippus makes him 'smile gently' —

aspexit laetos populos, vultuque modesto,  
circumfusa videns plaudentum milia, risit<sup>52</sup>.

We are familiar from late antique Imperial portraits, and from Ammianus' description of Constantius II, with the impassive, hieratic demeanour of the emperor<sup>53</sup>. Now in Corippus' scene we see the fullness of the symbolism being worked out in a complex treatment. Much is there, not all exploited in detail — the correspondences between the Palace and heaven, between the emperor in the Kathisma in the Hippodrome and on his throne in the Consistory — and the whole makes a scene well known not so much this time from art as from the history of protocol. Peter the Patrician's contemporary account of the protocol for the reception of a Persian ambassador is preserved intact in the Book of Ceremonies and shows how closely Corippus' presentation keeps to the actual ceremonial<sup>54</sup>. His version is simpler and more dramatic, but its basic purpose all the same is to demonstrate the underlying meaning of the ceremony.

(b) A second simple description of an artefact also leads to a more complex treatment of a larger theme. This is the description of Justinian's funeral vestment<sup>55</sup>. The poetic

<sup>51</sup> AGATHIAS, *AP*, 4, 3, 98; PAUL. SIL., *H. Soph.*, 944, 966; *Anth. Plan.*, 64, 3.

<sup>52</sup> 2, 304-5. Cf. PAUL. SIL., *H. Soph.*, 1004 (the gentle smile of the patriarch); 245 f. (Justinian smiling gently at Constantinople).

<sup>53</sup> Portraiture: H. P. L'ORANGE, *Art Forms and Civic Life in the Late Roman Empire*, Princeton 1965, 124; BECKWITH, *Art of Constantinople*, 2nd ed., 10 f., p. 17 f. Constantius II: AMMIANUS, 16, 10, 2-10 (see MACMULLEN *art. cit.* (n. 18), 435 f.; M. P. CHARLESWORTH, *JRS*, XXXVII, 1947, 36 f.).

<sup>54</sup> *De Caer.*, 1, 89.

<sup>55</sup> 1, 276 f. It is not clear whether this is a robe or an actual pall; perhaps the former, as it is called *vestis*.

technique of describing a decorated textile is of course familiar; so is the deliberate choice of a symbolic or propaganda theme for the decoration described<sup>56</sup>. Decorated textiles with figural scenes whether sacred or secular were, again, a passion of the time<sup>57</sup>. But this one has a special interest. Known only from Corippus, and there is no reason why he should have invented it, this vestment provides a precious supplement to our meagre knowledge of Justinian's triumphal iconography. It is embroidered in gold and jewels with scenes of triumph on a purple ground. Justinian is shown in the palace, trampling Gelimer beneath his feet, while on the one hand Africa offers him laurel and the products of the country and on the other Rome, exposing her breast in traditional manner, holds out her hands towards him. All around are lines of barbarian troops, conquered kings and vanquished peoples, showing in order all the warlike achievements of Justinian. The time therefore is that of the famous Vandal triumph<sup>58</sup>, and the emphasis is on the West.

(c) We have to compare this description with Corippus' account of the gold vessels used at the coronation banquet. The reference there is the same — the Vandal triumph of 534 A.D., the year of Justinian's fourth consulship. Significantly enough, in neither description is Belisarius even mentioned, though the triumph was strictly his; the glory is transferred to the emperor in whose name the victory was won:

ipse triumphorum per singula vasa suorum  
barbarico historiam fieri mandaverat auro,  
tempore quo captis iniecit vincla tyrannis  
Iustinianus ovans, quarto cum consule princeps  
alta triumphali tereret Capitolia pompa<sup>59</sup>.

There is a difference in treatment, therefore, between (b)

<sup>56</sup> Cf. CLAUDIAN., *Stil.*, 2, 341 f.; *Pan. Prob. et Olyb.*, 177 f.; SIDONIUS, *carm.*, 15, 126 f., 158 f.

<sup>57</sup> A survey of material: A. GRABAR, *Byzantine Art from the death of Theodorus to the rise of Islam*, *Arts of Mankind*, London 1966, 334.

<sup>58</sup> *Proc.*, BV, 2, 9, 1 (AD 534).

<sup>59</sup> 'He had himself commanded that the story of his triumphs be shown on vessels in barbarian gold, at the time when in triumph Justinian cast chains on captured tyrants, when in his fourth consulship the emperor trod the lofty Capitol in his triumphal procession' (3, 120 f.).



and (c). Whereas the scenes on the cups depict a specific moment, that on the funeral vestment shows a more generalised presentation. There is no exact contemporary parallel for this symbolic as opposed to realistic treatment of the theme of barbarian submission<sup>60</sup>. Brief though Corippus' reference is, therefore, it can add a new datum to modern discussions of the theme, and a valuable one, for it is a curious fact that the two other known examples which best illustrate this Imperial theme are also lost to us. The great mosaic on the ceiling of the Chalce is known only from Procopius' description<sup>61</sup>, yet was clearly close in inspiration to the funeral vestment: Justinian and Theodora in the middle were flanked by the senate, receiving the spoils of Africa and Italy from Belisarius at the head of his army, while in the lateral vaults were shown Belisarius' campaigns. The subject matter, then, was the same. But closer in treatment were the triumphal reliefs on the base of the column of Arcadius, also now lost but known from sixteenth century drawings<sup>62</sup>. One of the reliefs showed *togati* offering laurel crowns, with Rome and Constantinople standing on either side. Another showed the emperors trampling barbarians beneath their feet, a third Victories casting barbarians to the ground while other barbarians offered gifts to the emperor. Here certainly is a more symbolic treatment, and one which the craftsman who designed Justinian's funeral vestment applied to the great historical moment of Belisarius' Vandal triumph.

From these simple ekphrastic passages we can turn to the first of Corippus' larger set-pieces — the preface itself. For we can now see in a much more complex and now literary form the ideas underlying the passages already discussed. Only here the triumphal ideology is applied to Justin, emperor for a few weeks or months at most when the preface was written. The theme of triumph has become a genera-

<sup>60</sup> Contrast the more naturalistic style of the Barberini ivory (DELBRUECK, *o. c.* (n. 20), nr. 48; GRABAR, *L'Empereur*, 48-9). See BECKWITH, *Art of Constantinople*, 2nd ed., 38 f.

<sup>61</sup> *Aed.*, 1, 10, 16. See GRABAR, *L'Empereur*, 81 f.; C. MANGO, *The Brazen House*, Copenhagen 1959, 32 f.

<sup>62</sup> STET, *Brazen House*, 33 ff.; G. Q. GIGLIOLI, *La Colonna di Arcadio a Costantinopoli*, Naples 1952. See plate V.

lised compliment to any emperor, however unwarlike — or, more sympathetically, the role of triumphator is now an integral component of the Imperial *persona*. The emperor himself is depersonalised; it is the office that is celebrated, not the individual. Moreover, Corippus' preface is a perfect example in literary terms of the static presentation of the theme of victory long familiar in visual art.

The formal arrangement of the preface is fairly simple. An enumeration of all the barbarian peoples who (Corippus hopefully says) submit to the will of Justin leads eventually to a mention of Africa and a transition to Corippus' personal life and circumstances. At a deeper level, however, by inserting six lines naming Justin and his immediate family, Corippus places the Imperial group in a tableau in the middle of the set piece, like the central figures in a visual scene of triumph<sup>63</sup>. So too in the nearest literary parallel, the exactly contemporary preface to Agathias' *Cycle*<sup>64</sup>: here similarly a reference to the emperor is placed in the middle of an enumeration of the extent of his empire<sup>65</sup>. Agathias makes the point that the emperor is the bestower of *γαλήνη*: so too for Paul the Silentiary Justinian as conqueror and tyrant-slayer pacifies the world and restores *γαλήνη*<sup>66</sup>. Unlike the Greek poets, Corippus does not introduce the notion of Imperial calm here, but he does play on the meanings of the names of the empress, Sophia, and Justin's mother, Vigilantia, thus emphasising the idea of the moral strength of the emperor to which the barbarians submit. The barbarians hurry to do homage (*currunt...quaerunt...properant...*), while at the centre there is calm —

tu quoque, Iustitiae nomen de nomine sumens,  
frena regendorum retines firmissima regum<sup>67</sup>.

There is then a relationship of ideas between the preface and the scene of the Avar embassy in the tension between

<sup>63</sup> See R. BRILLIANT, *Gesture and Rank in Roman Art*, *Mem. Coll. Warburg*, 19, New Haven 1963, 11 f.

<sup>64</sup> *AP.*, 4, 3. For the date, see JHS, LXXVI, 1966, 6 ff.

<sup>65</sup> 1, 98.

<sup>66</sup> *H. Soph.* 934 f.; 944; cf. 947, 951.

<sup>67</sup> « You too, taking your name from the name of Justice, hold firm the reins on rulers whom you must rule » (*praef.*, 24-25).



wild movement and central impassivity, a tension by no means originating with Corippus, and inherent already in Imperial iconography. Indeed, the striking way in which both the Greek poets and Corippus present their theme of the emperor as the central figure in an ideological tableau, the warrior in calm control of the whole world, is testimony to the continuance of this formal conception of empire at a time when the artistic treatments of it have been lost to us<sup>68</sup>. The fact that there is certainly a connection between Paul's work and that of Agathias<sup>69</sup>, and quite possibly between Corippus' poem and the Greek poems too, does not diminish their cumulative effect. It is irrelevant, too, that they should treat the middle-aged and unwarlike Justin in the same way as the great Justinian<sup>70</sup>. For realism is not the point, and indeed Corippus himself fails to see that he is spoiling his carefully worked presentation when later in the poem he makes Justin reproach the spirit of Justinian for deserting the empire when it is so direly threatened by war<sup>71</sup>.

But there is still another connection between Corippus' preface and contemporary visual art. Both Corippus and Agathias give us essentially a list or procession of conquered nations, and that is just what appears on Justinian's funeral vestment. It is depicted pictorially also on the Chalce mosaic, while at the foot of the Barberini ivory there is a frieze of barbarians offering gifts<sup>72</sup>. The Arcadius base showed the same processional arrangement, and so does one side of the base of the obelisk of Theodosius<sup>73</sup>. This symmetrical arrangement, with processions of barbarians or conquered provinces, is taken over into religious art, where we find, for instance, triumphal representations of Christ flanked by rows of archangels or apostles. The best known are perhaps the domes of the Orthodox Baptistery at Ravenna and the church

<sup>68</sup> See BEILLIANT, *l.c.*

<sup>69</sup> Cf. AGATHIAS, *Hist.*, 5, 9.

<sup>70</sup> JUSTIN, *Anth. Plan.*, 72. JUSTINIAN, *H. Soph.*, 10-16, 225 f., 985 f. Cf. also PRIC, *Acad.*, 1, 1, 6 f.; JOH. LYD., *De mag.*, 3, 1, 55-56.

<sup>71</sup> 1, 254 f.

<sup>72</sup> DELBRUECK, *nr.* 48; BECKWITH, *fig.* 49. See plate II.

<sup>73</sup> GRABAR, *L'Empereur*, 54 f. Arcadius column; obelisk side B1 (numbering from G. BRUNS, *Der Obelisk und seine Basis auf dem Hippodrom zu Konstantinopel*, Istanbul 1935. See L'ORANGE, *Art Forms and Civic Life*, 104.

of St. George at Thessaloniki<sup>74</sup>. To make the parallelism even clearer we have a precious testimony from a homily attributed to St. John Chrysostom commenting on *Matth.* 24, 30, where Jesus describes the end of the world. The sign of the Cross will appear in heaven and men will see the Son of Man 'coming in the cloud of heaven with power and great glory'. This, says our author<sup>75</sup>, is like representations of the emperor, where he is shown with a zone of bodyguards around him and beneath, barbarians bending the knee. At the Second Coming, there will be a similar sight — Christ surrounded above by a zone of believers, and below, a zone of unbelievers bending the knee beneath His feet.

Nothing could be clearer; and as religious art had taken on Imperial forms, so now these literary treatments of Imperial majesty have taken on the patterning of visual triumphal iconography. More than that: I would suggest that we can see the influence of these arrangements elsewhere in Corippus' poem too. The rows of people lining the benches of the Hippodrome, for example<sup>76</sup>, or the lists of flanking officials so reminiscent of the obelisk of Theodosius<sup>77</sup>, the funeral procession of Justinian<sup>78</sup>, the list of the Palatine guards<sup>79</sup> or the consular procession of Justin himself<sup>80</sup>. Thus the literary treatment of the work itself — notably in the preface, but elsewhere too — assimilates a presentation characteristic of official and religious visual art.

The theme of triumph extends more deeply into the work than this. Above all in the last book, where Corippus treats Justin's consular inauguration, triumphal iconography, now merged with that of the Imperial *adventus*, overlies the pu-

<sup>74</sup> S. BETTINI, *Il Battistero della Cattedrale*, Felix Ravenna, LIII, 1950, 43 ff. The dating of the mosaics of the Rotunda (now the church of St. George) at Thessaloniki is controversial, ranging from the early fifth to the eighth centuries. A late fifth century date now seems probable see M. VICKERS, *The Date of the Mosaic of the Rotunda at Thessaloniki*, PBSR, XXXV, 1970, 183 ff., with bibliography.

<sup>75</sup> PG, 59, 650 f.; cf. PG, 51, 71, 147, where the analogy is between the arrangement of victor and vanquished in Imperial iconography and the inner or 'higher' meaning of the Scriptures in relation to their surface meaning.

<sup>76</sup> 2, 312 f.

<sup>77</sup> 2, 279 f., cf. 4, 330 f.

<sup>78</sup> 3, 39 f.

<sup>79</sup> 3, 159 f.

<sup>80</sup> 4, 224 f.

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rely consular motifs. An Imperial consul in any case wore the triumphal costume, the jewel encrusted *trabea*<sup>81</sup>, and by now while a triumph in the strict sense was a total anachronism (as Procopius' account of the Vandal triumph shows), triumphal associations could be applied to any Imperial ceremony. Corippus himself makes this clear: Justin rides in a *sella triumphalis* (IV. 107); the chair is raised in *magnum triumphum* (IV. 227); the celebrations are called 'Justin's triumph' (IV. 141). But this consular procession has also the features of a Byzantine *adventus*<sup>82</sup>. The characteristics of this ceremony are well documented in art and in literature, especially panegyric<sup>83</sup>; here it is enough to point to Corippus' insistence on the expectation of the people (IV. 121), followed by the description of the actual appearance of Justin (224 f.). Everywhere is festooned with garlands and the whole scene takes place to the accompaniment of acclamations (207, 255, cf. 131). The light of the sun is *felix* (98), as is the world under Justin's rule (132), and the year of his consulship (140). And finally the word itself — the people are awaiting the *consulis adventum* (211).

This scene, it is true, has its prototype in Claudian's descriptions of the consular procession of Honorius in Milan<sup>84</sup>, those of Stilicho in Milan and Rome<sup>85</sup> and the triumphal entry of Honorius into Rome in 404<sup>86</sup>. Already there was the assimilation of triumph and consular procession which we see again in 534 at the Vandal triumph; for Justinian himself received the homage of the triumphing general as consul, clothed in the triumphal costume<sup>87</sup>.

<sup>81</sup> DELBRUECK, 65 f.; cf. CLAUDIAN, *IV cos. Hon.*, 585 f.; *VI cos. Hon.*, 560 f.; JOH. LYD., *De mag.*, 2, 2.

<sup>82</sup> Fundamental: E. PETERSON, *Die Einholung des Kyrios*, Zeitschr. f. system. Theologie, VII, 1930, 682 ff.; A. ALFÖLDI, *Die Ausgestaltung des monarchischen Zeremoniells im römischen Kaiserhofe*, MDAI(R), XLIX, 1934, 88 ff.; E. KANTOROWICZ, *The King's Advent*, The Art Bulletin, XXVI, 1944, 207 ff.; J. DEER, *Der Ursprung der Kaiserkrone*, Schweiz. Beiträge f. allgemeine Geschichte, VIII, 1950, 51 ff.

<sup>83</sup> E. HEITSCH, *Die griech. Dichterfragmente der römischen Kaiserzeit*, Göttingen, 1964, nr. XLII. 1, 128 is a poem by Dioscorus of Aphroditon on the *adventus* of an icon of Justin II himself in Egypt. See H. KRUSE, *Studien zur offiziellen Geltung des Kaiserbildes im römischen Reiches*, Paderborn, 1934, 41 ff.

<sup>84</sup> *IV Cos. Hon.*, 1 f., 565 f.

<sup>85</sup> *Stil.*, 4, 198 f., 345 f.

<sup>86</sup> *VI Cos. Hon.*, 534 f.

<sup>87</sup> *Proc.*, BV, 2, 9, 1 f.; JOH. LYD., *De mag.*, 2, 4.

But the scene had a special significance when acted out by Justin, and Corippus faithfully reflects this. The main point in reviving the consulship after it had been allowed to lapse for twenty-five years was for its value in winning popularity for the emperor. Not merely did the taking of the consulship reinforce Justin's position as heir to the Imperial tradition; it guaranteed to the people splendid games and displays and the distribution of largesse on a massive scale<sup>88</sup>, however much Justin (and Corippus) might try to represent it as a vehicle for good government and the ending of abuses<sup>89</sup>. The giving of largesse to senators and officials indeed takes up a large part of Corippus' description<sup>90</sup>. That aspect spoke for itself; but to reinforce the prestige value of the consulship, Corippus bathes his account in solar imagery. The light of the sun rises together with that of the consul; New Rome and the Sacred Palace vie with heaven itself<sup>91</sup>.

The poet has used the symbolism of the two suns already, in an even more striking formulation and at an equally critical moment in Justin's assumption of power — the elevation on the buckler which preceded his crowning with the diadem<sup>92</sup>. In Corippus' somewhat halting words

The brave prince stood on that shield, looking like the sun;  
A second light shone out from the city. One and the same propitious day marvelled at the rising of twin suns.

Then Corippus spells out his meaning —

Has my poetry perhaps outstepped its limits? Perhaps you will wonder at my saying that twin suns were rising together. You will

<sup>88</sup> Corippus does not actually describe the *sparsio*, though cf. IV 9 f. Theophanes however testifies to its magnificence (AM 6059, 242 de Boor). Justin's second consulship in 568 did not repeat the splendour of the first: see E. STEIN, *Post-consulat et autokratia*, Mél. Bidez, 1934, 872 ff. For the extravagance of sixth century consuls cf. COM. MARC. ad a. 521, *Chron. Pasch.*, 617 B (Justinian's consulships in 521 and 528); *Proc.*, BV II. 9. 15-16 (Belisarius' consulships in 535); Nov., 105 (a. 536) consequently reserved the distribution of gold for Imperial consuls only.

<sup>89</sup> JUST., 2, 333 f.

<sup>90</sup> 4, 103 f.

<sup>91</sup> 4, 69 f.

<sup>92</sup> 2, 148 f. On this passage see L'ORANGE, *Cosmic Kingship*, 91-2, 3. KANTOROWICZ, *Oriens Augusti - Lever du Roi*, DOP, XVII, 1963, 119 ff., esp. 152 ff.; A. CHRISTOPHILOPOULOU, 'Εκλογή, ἀναγόμενους καὶ στέφεις τοῦ βυζαντινοῦ αὐτοκράτορος, Athens 1956, 51-52.

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agree, if you think over what I have said, that they were no mere empty words or pointless images that came from my lips. The mind of a just man shines more brightly than the sun. It does not sink beneath the waves, nor does it yield to darkness, nor is it overshadowed by dusky shade. The light of good works gleams with eternal radiance<sup>93</sup>.

This passage, inept as its expression may be, sums up the whole of the solar imagery which runs through the poem and invests the account of Justin's crowning with the deepest symbolic meaning. The raising of the emperor on the shield is presented as a divine epiphany; light shines out and the analogy between the emperor and the sun is suddenly made manifest. Again the theme is fundamental to Byzantine thought and again it is expressed equally in art.

For many centuries the round *clipeus* had represented the heavens or the disc of the sun. Now with the assimilation of solar and Christian associations the emperor shown in *clipeo* takes upon himself the personae of the sun and implicitly or explicitly of Christ. In a roundel at Dumbarton Oaks an emperor is shown thus with radiating lines from his figure to the edges of the circle, representing the light shining from the sun<sup>94</sup>; Christ Himself is shown on the shield held by emperor on the Barberini ivory, together with symbols of the sun, moon and stars<sup>95</sup>. By an analogous thought-process the Byzantines of Justin's period developed acclamations in which they called upon the emperor to 'rise' (*ἀνατεῖλον*)<sup>96</sup>; at a later date the appearance of the emperor in the Hippodrome became known as the 'rising of the emperor'<sup>97</sup>. In

<sup>93</sup> *adstitit in clipeo princeps fortissimus ille / solis habens speciem. lux altera fulsit ab urbe. / mirata est pariter geminos consurgere soles / una favens eademque dies. mea carmina numne / mensuram transgressa suam? mirabere forsitan / quod dixi geminos pariter consurgere soles. / nec vacuis verbis nec inanibus ista figuris / ore feres prolata meo, si dicta re- pendis. / mens iusti plus sole nitet. non mergitur undis, / non cedit tenebris, non fusca obtexitur umbra. / lux operum aeterno lucet splendore bonorum.* / (II. 148-158).

<sup>94</sup> H. PIERCE and R. TYLER, *Three Byzantine Works of Art*, DOP, II, 1941, 3 ff. add. pl. I. See plate IV b).

<sup>95</sup> DELBRUECK, no. 48. Plate II.

<sup>96</sup> *De Caer.*, I, 94, p. 451 Bonn. Cf. CEDREUS, I, 404 D.

<sup>97</sup> *De Caer.*, I, 68. See KANTOROWICZ, *art. cit.* (n. 81), 153 f.; TREITINGER, *Reichsidee*, 117 f.

our example the poet spells out what would have been obvious to any contemporary; more than that, he extends the imagery by a figure of his own. Justin stands upon the shield upright like the initial letter of his own name (139 f.), the iota which is the symbol of stability and which begins the triad of names — Justin I, Justinian, Justin II — rulers with equal powers, of one dynasty. We have met this conceit elsewhere, too, to similar effect. When the people gather in the Hippodrome on hearing of Justinian's death, they await the accession of Justin like birds awaiting the rebirth of the phoenix; and the iota renews itself too, from Justinian to Justin, and in Justin Justinian lives again<sup>98</sup>.

To return to the raising on the buckler. Again Corippus has pointed out in explicit terms the symbolism of a familiar artistic theme, this time represented in an antiquarian ceremony which continued as a potent image in art and literature even after the ritual itself had become obsolete<sup>99</sup>. In this sun imagery, too, Corippus brings together his debts to visual art and his exploitation of the underlying theory. The analogy between the emperor and the sun had been standard in Byzantine political thought since Eusebius had adapted Hellenistic sun imagery to Christian purposes<sup>100</sup>. When Corippus uses the motif of the emperor 'rising like the sun'<sup>101</sup>, when he says 'the mind of a just man shines more brightly than the sun', he exploits a whole mass of symbolism with a resonance far deeper than the surface meaning of the words. Justin, whose name suggests 'justice', is brighter than the sun, which, as the sun of justice, suggests Christ Himself. So too when we find Corippus throughout the poem using terminology of light in association with the emperor<sup>102</sup>, the image goes deeper than a mere panegyric *topos*; this light

<sup>98</sup> I, 353 f.

<sup>99</sup> See CHRISTOPHILOPOULOU, *o. c.* (n. 92), 59 f.; J. L. NELSON, *Rituals of Emperor-Making in Early Medieval Byzantium*, forthcoming.

<sup>100</sup> See F. DVORNIK, *Early Christian and Byzantine Political Philosophy*, Dumbarton Oaks Studies, IX, 1966, 621 ff.; F. DÖLGER, *Die Sonne der Gerechtigkeit und der Schwarze*, Liturgiegeschichtliche Forschungen, II, 1918 (Münster-in-W.), 100 f.; *Sol Salutis*, *ibid.*, IV-V, 1920, 295.

<sup>101</sup> 2, 291; 3, 179; 4, 251 f.

<sup>102</sup> Eg. 1, 237, 250 (of Justinian), 363; 2, 71, 90 f., 149 f., 171, 229; 3, 71 f., 180 f., 211; 4, 96 f., 128 f., 243, 251 f., 328.



is the light of joy and happiness, the light of moral virtue, but also the light of the sun, which is the light of Christ. When we find Justin called *lux* or *lumen*, or especially *lumen mundi*, the words of Christ are not far behind<sup>103</sup>.

The second book of the *Laudes* contains a lengthy account of Justin's robing, from the elevation on the buckler to the crowning with the diadem<sup>104</sup>, which Corippus follows up with a striking speech put into the mouth of Justin while he is still in the Palace<sup>105</sup>. But it is Justin's appearance in the Hippodrome that is the really memorable scene in this book<sup>106</sup>. The acclamation of the emperor in the Hippodrome was one of the great set pieces of Byzantine life<sup>107</sup>; its importance transcends the holding of games and racing as such, for here above all the emperor and people come face to face. This is the scene on the base of the obelisk of Theodosius, one of the greatest of all Byzantine monuments: the emperor, flanked by high officials, shows himself to the factions and people. Corippus gives this scene a dramatic treatment: three elaborate similes illustrate the moving arms of the acclaiming populace<sup>108</sup>. The factions shout out their formulaic greetings<sup>109</sup>; there are perhaps formal dances and choral movements, as on the obelisk<sup>110</sup>. Justin enters the Kathisma with the suddenness of an epiphany — *egreditur cum luce sua* (1. 299) — his mien hieratic, a calm smile breaking out as he surveys the applauding people. The treatment, then, is dynamic, with a vivid sense of movement — all the more

<sup>103</sup> Especially when mosaics could carry the same legend (GRABAR, *L'Empereur*, 103 f.). The words are from JOH. 8, 12 «ego sum lux mundi; qui sequitur me non ambulabit in tenebris sed habebit lumen vitae». Analogies between the rising of the sun, the 'rising' of spring, and the coming, and then the Resurrection of Christ are very common in homiletic, e.g. ASTERIUS, PG, XL, 404.

<sup>104</sup> 2, 84 f.

<sup>105</sup> 2, 178 f. For the head and body analogy (186 f.) cf. SENECA, *De Clementia*, 1, 5, 1; AGAPETUS, *Ekthesis*, PG, 86, 1163, para. 46; E. KANTOROWICZ, *The King's Two Bodies*, Princeton 1957, 185 f.

<sup>106</sup> 2, 278-430.

<sup>107</sup> For its victory symbolism see GAGÉ, *art. cit.*, (n. 18), 375.

<sup>108</sup> 2, 316 (waves); 321 (trees); 327 (sea).

<sup>109</sup> 2, 310 f.

<sup>110</sup> 2, 317 «disponunt cantus et motum cantibus addunt». On the obelisk (plate III) we see organs and flute players as well as dancers. The anon. *περί σπαρ.* (H. KÖCHLY and W. RUSTOW, *Griechische Kriegsschriftsteller*, II, 2, 1855) speaks of charioteers, musicians and actors taking part in the proclamations of emperors (3, 15).

when Justin's speech from the Kathisma is followed by a vivid scene in which the records of debts still contracted by Justinian are burned in the Hippodrome to the sound of rapturous applause<sup>111</sup>. Yet the whole scene is also conceived both visually and symbolically; the yellow flames vie with the piles of gold ready for the repayment of debts, while men hurry forward to claim their due, and bless Justin as they carry it away<sup>112</sup>. At the same time the scene is a showpiece of *pietas*, the supreme Imperial virtue<sup>113</sup>. The payment of the debts is followed by *aliud pietatis opus* (1. 407) — the release of prisoners. *Pius* and *pietas* applied to the emperor occur four times in less than twenty lines, preparing the way for the ending of the book. And now the section in which Corippus has described the solemn rites of coronation ends with the most solemn theme of all — the presentation of the emperor as the analogue of Christ. For by this display of *pietas*, illustrated in the exercise of the Imperial virtue of *φιλανθρωπία*, the emperor reveals himself as the *imago Christi*<sup>114</sup>.

terrarum dominis Christus dedit omnia posse.  
ille est omnipotens, hic omnipotentis imago (11. 427-8).

This line is the ideological climax of the book, with the last couplet acting only as a dying fall, and it brings us back to the theme of the subordination of the emperor to God, a theme emphatically stated in Justin's prayer with which the book opens. The coronation, therefore, is set within the framework of the overall authority of God. At the beginning, in his prayer, Justin is

parvus homo, immensi factus factoris imago (1. 29).

<sup>111</sup> 2, 361 f. Cf. PRISCIAN., *Pan. Anast.*, 149 f. — a strikingly similar scene.

<sup>112</sup> 2, 392 f.

<sup>113</sup> Especially in 11, 407-430.

<sup>114</sup> Sixth century statements of the *imago Christi* idea — AGAPETUS, *Ekthesis*, para. 41; JUSTINIAN., *CJ*, 1, 1, 6; V. 4, 33, 16, 27; Nov. VIII, 11. An altarcloth in St. Sophia depicted acts of Imperial *φιλανθρωπία* (PAUL. SIL., *H. Soph.*, 196 f.) Earlier: see N. BAYNES, *Eusebius and the Christian Empire*, *Byzantine Studies*, 1955, 168 ff.; DVORNIK, *o. c.* (p. 100), II, 61 ff. It was by *φιλανθρωπία* above all that the emperor imitated Christ — see D. CONSTANTINOS, *Byzantine Philanthropy and Social Welfare*, New Brunswick 1968, 20 ff.



By the end, after his coronation, he is in the fullest sense the *imago Christi*.

Now perhaps we can return to a passage at the beginning of the first book. Before Justin receives official word of Justinian's death, he is visited in a dream by a female figure simply described as *virgo* (I. 33), and then as *sacrae Pietatis imago* (I. 36). She places the diadem on his head, invests him with the Imperial insignia and tells him not merely that Justinian is dead but also that God has ordained him as successor. At first sight perhaps a conventional enough piece of epic machinery — though elsewhere Corippus eschews such devices<sup>115</sup>. But the writer of the marginal periochae of the poem was sure that the Virgin Mary was meant; when the Empress prays to the Virgin in the second book she calls upon the *pietas miranda Dei* (II. 57), and the Virgin there too is called simply *virgo*. Divine visitants in dreams did not surprise a Byzantine, and the patriarch Eutychius, to be restored to his seat in Constantinople at the end of Justin's reign, had more than one vision in which the accessions of Justin and Maurice were revealed to him<sup>116</sup>. The emperor in Corippus' poem, as the embodiment of virtue and piety, is not unlike the subject of a saint's life, and as such will naturally be granted signs of divine favour. In fact there is a striking parallel from Leontius' life of St. John the Almsgiver, where the saint is visited in a dream by a maiden wearing a wreath of olive, who says « I am the first of the daughters of the King... I caused Him to put on man's nature on earth to bring salvation to men »<sup>117</sup>. She is clearly the Virgin, though John identifies her as *ἐλεημοσύνη*, signified by the olive<sup>118</sup>; thus she foreshadows the epithet by which John was himself to be known, and the whole episode fulfils an aetiological function. *ἐλεημοσύνη*, furthermore, often corresponds to *φιλανθρωπία*<sup>119</sup>. Similarly in Corippus' poem the section

<sup>115</sup> Except for *Fama* (I. 299 f.). Cf. also JOH., I. 241 ff.

<sup>116</sup> EUSTATHIUS, V. *Eutychii*, PG, 86, 2349, 2353.

<sup>117</sup> Trans. E. DAWES and N. BAYNES, *Three Byzantine Saints*, Oxford 1948, 215. 215. Greek text ed. E. Delehaye, *Analecta Bollandiana*, XLV, 1927, 29, cf. 72.

<sup>118</sup> Ed. Delehaye, 29, 10 f.; DAWES and BAYNES, l.c. It is curious that in both cases the Virgin's identity is left mysteriously veiled.

<sup>119</sup> Constantelos, o.c. (n. 114), 17 ff.

about Justin's dream reinforces as strongly as possible the basic idea that the poet is trying to present — the inevitability and rightness of Justin's succession; but in addition it is to be linked as closely as possible with the set piece at the end of book II, to show Justin as the very embodiment of the *φιλόχριστος βασιλεύς*.

Certainly the literary *topos* of the prophetic dream so common in epic must have played a part in Corippus' decision to include this passage here. But in the specific form in which the theme is used here the analogy with visual art seems closer yet again. Specific surviving examples of the artistic theme of Christ or a saint crowning the emperor are not earlier than the ninth century<sup>120</sup>, but this late date is surprising in the context of the many earlier references in Byzantine literature to the idea of the emperor deriving his power from God. Already in Priscian's panegyric on Anastasius the poet had spoken of God Himself investing the emperor ('caput ipse tuum primo diademate cinxit')<sup>121</sup>, and the subsidiary but closely related theme of the emperor's 'benediction' by God appears in sixth century art — an altarcloth in St. Sophia, depicting Justinian and Theodora being blessed on one side by the hands of the Mother of God and on the other by Christ Himself<sup>122</sup>. At later Byzantine coronations the emperor was acclaimed with the cry 'God has ratified you as emperor'<sup>123</sup>, « And in Justin's own speech proclaiming Tiberius Caesar the emperor told him to remember that 'God has given this to you, not I' »<sup>124</sup>. In a more general sense, too, the representation of an emperor in company with a divine personage could express the same idea, and here the Cross which Justin sent to Rome and which is now in the Vatican treasury is important, for it carries portraits of Justin and Sophia on either arm, while the other points carry medallions of Christ and its centre a representation of the

<sup>120</sup> So GRABAR, *L'Empereur*, 112 f.

<sup>121</sup> II, 162-3.

<sup>122</sup> PAUL SIL., *H. Soph.*, 802-4. For this theme see also GRABAR, *L'Iconoclisme*, 21 f.

<sup>123</sup> *De Caer.*, I, 294.

<sup>124</sup> THEOPHANES, AM, 6070, 248. 19 de Boor (wrongly put by Theophanes in 578 when Tiberius was crowned Augustus).

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Lamb of God<sup>125</sup>. While we cannot therefore show an exact artistic parallel for Corippus' motif from this period we can at least set it within a context and see once again how in this poem Corippus constantly follows the themes and the symbolism traceable in art.

A final scene: after the coronation itself and before the banquet comes the funeral procession of Justinian<sup>126</sup>. The line of priests and virgins escorting the body with psalms through a vast multitude of spectators again does not happen to be shown in such contemporary art as has survived. But it is treated again by Corippus as a visual and ideological set piece. Justin addresses the dead emperor, voicing the official doctrines: Justinian has gone to join the angelic hosts, where there is no darkness<sup>127</sup>. Then the procession moves off, all singing and weeping, until it arrives at the Church of the Holy Apostles. A very similar procession took place in 581, at the funeral of the patriarch Eutychius, described for us by a contemporary<sup>128</sup>. Both authors draw on the same range of details; Eutychius too is laid in the Church of the Holy Apostles, the resting place of emperors and patriarchs, and despite possible rhetorical elaboration in both cases it is clear that Corippus is again describing a real occasion with a vivid sense of pictorial detail. The nearest artistic parallel is an ivory from the cathedral treasury at Trier showing a martyr's relics being conducted to a memoria, escorted by the emperor himself<sup>129</sup>; crowds of people hang out of the windows overlooking the route swinging incense and no doubt singing psalms. But on the literary level Corippus has overdone it here by piling on the emotionalism to grotesque effect and following it with a violent transition from sorrow to joy as the people prepare for the coronation banquet. Now that Justinian has safely joined the angelic hosts,

<sup>125</sup> GRABAR, *L'Iconoclasme*, 25; Beckwith, fig. 55. See plate I b). Compare the image known to have been in the Blachernae church showing the Virgin enthroned between Leo I and members of his family — GRABAR, *ibid.*, 21-24.

<sup>126</sup> 3, 28 f.

<sup>127</sup> 3, 32.

<sup>128</sup> EUSTRATIUS, *V. Eutychii*, PG 86, 2384 ff.

<sup>129</sup> W. F. VOLBACH, *Elfenarbeiten der Spätantike und des frühen Mittelalters*, 2nd ed., Mainz 1952, no. 143 (= Delbrueck no. 67). See plate VI.

Justin and Sophia can be addressed amid music as the 'two lights of the world'<sup>130</sup>.

That theme itself recurs throughout the work, closely connected with that of *felicitas*. Again Corippus puts over the idea of the renewal and happiness brought by the new reign by means of a combination of two techniques. First there is the constant reiteration in connection with the emperor of words like *felix*, *feliciter* and *laetus*<sup>131</sup>, forming part of the cluster of nouns and adjectives which continually hammer home certain desired attributes. *Lux*, *lumen*, *pius*, *tranquillus*, *placidus*, *serenus* all fall into this category<sup>132</sup>, giving the poem a certain ritual and hieratic quality at times not far removed from the similar wording of contemporary acclamations, which indeed Corippus sometimes actually embodies in it<sup>133</sup>. The poet also makes Justin promise a new age overtly in a speech<sup>134</sup> and the senate express the same hope and affirmation when acclaiming him as consul<sup>135</sup>. But in another interesting passage he conveys the same idea by the second of his two methods — the exploitation of the symbolism of visual art.

Corippus concludes the first book, as he does the second, with an ideological set-piece. This time its effectiveness is debatable; for after describing the people hearing the news of Justinian's death he suddenly launches into a very academic account of the origins of chariot racing<sup>136</sup>, a clumsy prelude

<sup>130</sup> 3, 60 f., esp. 71, 76 f., and cf. 2, 171. The phrase *duo lumina mundi* is often applied to the saints Peter and Paul — e.g. JOIL CHRYS., PG, LX, 678; ARATOR, *Act. Apost.*, 2, 1219; VENANT. FORT., *carm.* 3, 7, 3.

<sup>131</sup> *Felix*: Pan. Anast. 31, 51; I, 44, 78 f., 144, 203; II, 49, 123, 135, 164, 173, 298; IV, 132 f., 248. Cf. PRISCIAN, Pan. Anast. 237 'felicitas domini fruitur nunc tempore laeto'. For the background of this, e.g. in third century panegyric, cf. F. BURDEAU, *L'Empereur d'après les panegyristes latins, Aspects de l'empire romain*, Paris 1964, 25 ff., ALFÖLDI, MDAI(R), I, 1935, 38 ff.

<sup>132</sup> *Lux*: see n. 102 above. *Pius*: (one of the commonest words in the poem) Praef., 29, 37, 44; Pan. Anast. 29, 36; I, 4, 93, 115 etc. *Tranquillus*: (see 139 f. above) 3, 309; II, 275, 330, 339; 4, 377. *Placidus*: Praef., 21; I, 66, 72; III, 310; 4, 372. *Serenus*: II, 93, 191, 299; 3, 266, 309; 4, 257. Cf. PRISCIAN, Pan. Anast., Praef., 20 f.; 52, 170. Some of this is of course purely repetition of stock epithets, but there is more to it than that.

<sup>133</sup> 1, 346 f.; 2, 165 f., 276 f., 308 f., 4, 130 f., 254 f. See TREITINGER, *Reichsidee*, 71 f., ALFÖLDI, MDAI(R), XLIX, 194, 81 f.

<sup>134</sup> 2, 350 f. Cf. PRISCIAN, Pan. Anast. 180 f. Restoration and renewal are the main themes of Priscian's poem.

<sup>135</sup> 4, 132 f.

<sup>136</sup> 1, 314 f.



to his presentation of the people in the Hippodrome, excitedly waiting for the announcement of Justin's accession. There are real problems of detail here too<sup>137</sup>. But the point at present is that although Corippus' account fits into a network of literary sources it is best illustrated by a series of African mosaics of the fourth century which show symbolic representations of the four Hippodrome colours closely associated, as they are here, with the four seasons<sup>138</sup>. Now season symbolism, as is well known<sup>139</sup>, is intimately connected with the whole idea of *renovatio* and *felicitas* — which also seems to have been associated with the circus games as such<sup>140</sup>. So the apparently dry antiquarian section has a very real point. Corippus follows it up by representing Justin, the hoped-for successor, in the image of the phoenix, the bird of the sun and the symbol of *renovatio* par excellence<sup>141</sup>. As the phoenix is the bird of the sun, so Justin is the image of the sun on earth: the solar imagery of the Hippodrome and the solar imagery of the emperor come together and prepare the ground for the great statement of the analogy of the emperor and the sun in the next book. That is not all: Corippus rounds off the whole sequence here by his own symbolism of the iota which signifies both continuity and renewal<sup>142</sup>. As the phoenix renews itself so the dynasty carries on.

Again we have no surviving artistic treatments of this theme from the sixth century, but it is probably mere acci-

<sup>137</sup> In the grouping of colours: line 329 seems to connect white with green, whereas in Constantinople white went regularly with blue. For a full discussion see ALAN CAMERON, *Circus Factions*, (forthcoming), Appendix E. cf. also my comm. *ad loc.*

<sup>138</sup> Literary sources: TERTULLIAN, *De Spectaculis*, 9; CASSIODORUS, *Var.*, 3, 51; anon. *De circensibus* (AL 197 Riese); JOH. LYD., *De mens.*, 4, 25; MALALAS, 175 B; ISIDOR., *Etym.*, 18, 34 f. See esp. E. CASTORINA, comm. on Tertullian, *De Spect.*, Florence 1961, LXXXII f.; P. WUILLEUMIER, *Cirque et astrologie*, MEFR, XLIV, 1927, 184 ff. Mosaics: see esp. A. MERLIN and L. POINSSOT, *Factions du cirque et saisons sur les mosaïques de Tunisie*, M&L Ch. Picard, II, 1949, 732 ff.; *Deux mosaïques de Tunisie à sujets prophylactiques*, Mon. Piot, XXXIV, 1934, 129 ff.

<sup>139</sup> G. M. A. HANFMAN, *The Season Sarcophagus in Dumbarton Oaks*, Dumbarton Oaks Studies, II, 1951, 160 ff.

<sup>140</sup> See A. FIGANIOL, *Recherches sur les jeux romains*, 1923, 141, 149.

<sup>141</sup> I, 349 f. Besides Corippus' literary models (CLAUDIAN, *Stil.*, 2, 414 f., *carm.*, 27; and cf. [LACTANTIUS], *de phoenice*; SIDONIUS, *carm.*, 2, 417; 7, 354 f.; 9, 325; 11, 125; 22, 50; JOHN OF GAZA, *Ekphr.*, 2, 208-277) the phoenix was used in Christian art as a symbol of immortality; see F. VAN DER MEER, *Early Christian Art*, trans. P. and F. Brown, London 1967, 64.

<sup>142</sup> I, 353 f. Above, 149.

dent that all the surviving mosaics showing season symbolism in connection with circus colours are African, for a Jewish midrash from Constantinople of a later date, showing Solomon in the guise of a Byzantine emperor in the hippodrome, explicitly refers to the same association<sup>143</sup>. Corippus was himself an African poet, it is true, but there may well have been similar mosaics in Constantinople itself. At any rate, while the literary treatment may be stumbling, this passage in the poem shows perhaps better than any other the blending of literary and artistic themes into a symbolic whole. The history of circus colours, a piece of antiquarian lore found in several sources of the sixth century and earlier, in fact provides the theoretical basis for a symbolism expressed also in visual art. The reference to the origins of chariot racing (citing Pelops and almost certainly Oenomaus too) is itself an artistic theme<sup>144</sup>, while the image of the phoenix belongs equally to art and literature<sup>145</sup>. Corippus has in fact put together out of unpromising material a construction with overtones of symbolism which combine to form a very powerful impression.

Yet it is very hard to assess the contemporary impact of the poem. A complex Latin poem, composed and as far as we know recited in Constantinople, would seem a surprise in itself, were it not for the fact that Corippus actually refers to the official recitation of panegyrics in both languages during the consular ceremonies<sup>146</sup>. We know of the same practice in the reign of Anastasius<sup>147</sup>, but although Latin certainly persisted in official quarters well into Justinian's reign, and though it was possible for a Westerner to spend years in Constantinople without ever learning Greek<sup>148</sup>, bilin-

<sup>143</sup> H. GRÉGOIRE, *Les bleus et les verts à Constantinople*, CRAI, 1946, 577; E. PATLAGEAN, *Une image de Salomon en Basileus byzantin*, REJ, sér. IV, I, 1962, 22 argues for a 10th century dating, but the work could be earlier. Grégoire's seventh century date is however no more than a guess.

<sup>144</sup> See K. WEITZMANN, *Greek Mythology in Byzantine Art*, Princeton 1951, figs. 2-5, 167.

<sup>145</sup> n. 127, and cf. also H. MATTINGLY, *Num. Chron.* XIII, 1933, 187 ff.

<sup>146</sup> 4, 154 f.

<sup>147</sup> PRISCIAN., *Pan. Anast.*, 160 f.; PROC. GAZ., *Pan. Anast.*, 515 Bonn. cf. 516. Here we actually have surviving examples in both languages.

<sup>148</sup> Gregory the Great (*ep.*, 11, 74) says that he knew no Greek, though



gualism was unusual well before Justin's day<sup>149</sup>. Nevertheless, Corippus must have felt confident of a large enough audience at court understanding Latin to make his work worth while. For the whole emphasis of the poem is on the court life of the capital, and there is no question of its having been aimed at a Western audience. The miniature panegyrics on high court dignitaries which Corippus inserts from time to time make sense only in a court setting<sup>150</sup>. The work has two dedications, the first to the emperor himself, the second to the quaestor Anastasius, a man of great influence on the emperor, though doomed to a dramatic end; for John of Ephesus tells how this notorious persecutor of Monophysites was one day seized with a fit while drawing near the Cross at a public ceremony in St. Sophia and had to be carried out, only to spend the remaining eighteen months of his life tormented by the devil<sup>151</sup>. Tiberius, then count of the excubitors, the eunuch Narses<sup>152</sup>, Theodorus the *magister officiorum* — these and other high officials like them<sup>153</sup> are the personages of Corippus' poem and might be expected to form its audience.

Nor is it clear that Corippus had been commissioned by Justin to put out the desired propaganda line. In his two prefaces he describes himself as a poor old man making a desperate bid for economic benefit. His *Johannis* had earned him a place in the bureaucracy of Constantinople, but evidently not a lucrative one, for his pose of grovelling poverty must surely amount to more than a mere literary topos<sup>154</sup>.

he spent six years in Constantinople. See L. HAHN, *Zum Gebrauch der lateinischen Sprache in Konstantinopel*, in «Festgabe M. von Schanz», Würzburg 1912, 173 ff.; B. Hemmerdinger, *Les lettres latines à Constantinople jusqu'à Justinien*, in «Polychordia. Festschrift f. F. Dölger I», Amsterdam 1966, 174 ff.

<sup>149</sup> Examples: SIDONIUS, *carm.*, 23, 234 f.; IG XIV, 1074 (on Claudian); AGATHIAS, *Hist.*, 5, 21 (Justin the son of Germanus). See I. ŠEVČENKO, *Synthronon*, Bibliothèque des cahiers archéologiques, II, 1968, 32-3.

<sup>150</sup> 1, 16 f., 212 f.; 4, 382 f., 366 f., 374 f.

<sup>151</sup> HE, 2, 29.

<sup>152</sup> Not the great commander under Justinian, who was still governing Italy. See now I. ŠEVČENKO, *The inscription of Justin II's time on the Mevlhane (Rhesion) gate at Istanbul*, Recueil des travaux de l'Institut d'études byzantines, XII, 1970, 4.

<sup>153</sup> See esp., 1, 15 f. (ANASTASIUS, THOMAS MAGNUS, THEODORUS, DEMETRIUS, then a lacuna; all are said to have urged Corippus to write his poem).

<sup>154</sup> *Praef.*, 37 f.; *Pan. Anast.*, 41 f.

Panegyric could, it is true, be written to the orders of its subject — Justinian asked John the Lydian to compose an encomium in preference, as John engagingly tells us, to orators from Rome itself<sup>155</sup>. But it could also be a means of attaining wealth and position, and the prevalence of panegyric compositions at this time, especially in Greek, leads one to see the genre more in terms of a competitive activity<sup>156</sup>. Certainly Corippus's version of Justin's accession is blandly tendentious<sup>157</sup>, for his aim was to please not merely his eminent patrons but also the Emperor himself. So too with his calm allusion to one of the major political scandals of these years, the execution of two prominent men for 'conspiracy'<sup>158</sup>. But whatever the initial reason for writing, the finished work resembles in technique a work of official art; it presents its subject matter in a certain light and shows us thereby the officially accepted way of looking at things. To call it propaganda for Justin is only part of the truth, for its terms of reference are wider, nothing short of an exposition of Byzantine ideas about the role of the emperor in the hierarchy uniting earth to heaven.

There is much in the poem that differentiates it from the earlier panegyric tradition, varied though that is<sup>159</sup>. The lack of a panegyric structure, the idea of a detailed description of real ceremonies, the close connection with visual art and exploitation of artistic, religious and political symbolism — all these make the poem a highly unusual production; and this is the more striking in comparison with the conventional epic manner of the *Johannis*. Neither classical tradition nor the Christian Latin poetry from which Corippus borrowed various verbal details gave him a model for this new work. More than a decade spent in Constanti-

<sup>155</sup> *De mag.*, 3, 28.

<sup>156</sup> For the vast quantities of encomia produced in the late Empire (especially in Greek) see A. CAMERON, *Wandering Poets*, *Historia*, XIV, 1965, 470 ff.; T. VIJAMAA, *Studies in Greek Encomiastic Poetry of the Early Byzantine Period*, Helsinki 1968, 29 ff. and *passim*; some examples — HEITSCH, *o. c.* (n. 83), XXVII ff., XXX ff. etc.

<sup>157</sup> n. 30 above.

<sup>158</sup> 1, 60 f. 'quisquis erit vestrae, per se cadet, invadit aulae, / adu'ietque viros legum plus ensis iniquos', cf. 4, 347 f. Cf. JON. EPI., HE, 2, 29.

EUSTRAT., V. *Eutychii*, PG 86, 2361, 2364. See n. 37 above.

<sup>159</sup> See MURRAY, *art. cit.* (n. 21).

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nople had evidently stimulated this African grammaticus to express in poetic form the meaning of the Imperial ceremonial to which he came fresh. Beyond that we cannot go, for we have no hints as to the reception of the work, and while it is tempting to ask whether Agathias' or Corippus' preface came first, there is no direct means of providing an answer and no testimonies to suggest whether or not the poem was a success.

The world of the later sixth century was a time of change, not least in its art. It is also a period from which few art works survive, and from which those that do are hard to date except relatively. The Barberini ivory, for example, and the Florence and Vienna diptychs have been very variously dated<sup>160</sup>. It is vital therefore, as I said earlier, to take some account at least of those lost works known only from literary testimony, a class which includes the great Chalce mosaic as well as the funeral vestment which Corippus describes. From such literary descriptions as those of Procopius and Corippus we can go some little way at least towards filling the gap created by the loss of virtually all the triumphal art which celebrated Justinian's victories. And while the specific objects mentioned in Corippus' poem may be few, the work as a whole gives us a better context in which to set such works as do survive.

To return to the problem posed at the beginning of this paper, Corippus' poem does much, I suggest, to reinforce the impression of the coexistence of different types of artistic approach. The apparent dichotomy between classicising themes and treatment persisting, for example, in silverware<sup>161</sup> and the more linear and abstract style of religious art<sup>162</sup> now shows up in a different way in Corippus' poem. For Justin seems to have set special emphasis on Roman themes — Constantinople on the coins, the victories holding up the throne, the revival of the consulship with its antique ceremonial.

<sup>160</sup> Bibliography: BECKWITH, 158, n. 52.

<sup>161</sup> BECKWITH, 49 f.; KITZINGER, *Berichte*, 3 ff.

<sup>162</sup> Especially clear in the Cross of Justin II and the Stuma and Riha patens; KITZINGER, *Berichte*, 16 ff., BECKWITH, 46-7.

Corippus shows Justin as the embodiment of Roman triumph in the consular procession, or trampling on barbarians and raising his hand in a gesture of menace, as Justinian had been shown on the great equestrian statues in the Hippodrome and the Augusteum<sup>163</sup>. After the renewal of hostilities with Persia Justin set up gold statues of himself and Sophia 'from the spoils of Assyria'<sup>164</sup>. Who knows what they looked like? These themes and Justin's policies went hand in hand; for it is clear that Justin saw himself as a second Justinian, and above all as a potential warrior, and to that extent he may have prolonged the purely Roman motifs for longer than their natural life, as he certainly did with the figure of Constantinople on his coins. Yet his ideas persisted, for his successors, Tiberius II and Maurice, inherited the consular ceremonial together with Justin's warlike policies, and revived a fourth century motif for the purpose<sup>165</sup>.

But it was Justin himself who sent to Rome the famous Cross which seems to mark such a difference in style; and Kitzinger's survey brilliantly shows how this more linear style went hand in hand with the development of icon worship and the consequent desire to express not the material object but its inner reality<sup>166</sup>. Justin's own reign saw a significant increase in image worship, culminating in the coming of the image of Camuliana to Constantinople in 574<sup>167</sup>, and Justin himself had a special devotion to the stylite St. Symeon the Younger, a vigorous defender of icons<sup>168</sup>. Here too, I would suggest, Corippus gives a context for these developments, and enables us to see how the religious and the Roman aspects of the emperor's role could coexist. When in circles close to the court the emperor could be presented without apparent awkwardness both as a Roman consul and as the

<sup>163</sup> Hippodrome: *Anth. Plan.* 62-3. Augusteum: GRABAR, *L'Empereur*, 46 f.; G. DOWNEY, TAPA; LXXI, 1940, 68 ff.; MANGO, *Brazen House*, 174 ff.

<sup>164</sup> AP, 9, 810.

<sup>165</sup> See ROSS, *art. cit.*, (n. 7), 254 ff.

<sup>166</sup> *Berichte* (n. 5).

<sup>167</sup> CEDREUS, 1, 685. See KITZINGER, DOP, VIII, 1954, 114, 121 f.; GRABAR, *L'Iconoclasme*, 30.

<sup>168</sup> St. Symeon's letter to Justin II complaining that Samaritans were destroying Christian icons — PG 86, 3215. The saint draws an interesting analogy between the respect accorded to the Imperial image and that due to holy icons. Justin's devotion to Symeon — H. DELEHAYE, *Les Saints stylites*, *Subsidia Hagiographica*, XIV, 1923, 266.



*imago Christi* it is not to be wondered at that these widely differing trends of thought are reflected in visual art also. I would suggest that instead of looking for explanations of divergent artistic styles in different workshops or in a rigid differentiation of genre, we ought rather to look to the psychology of the times. The varied attempts of scholars to date works like the Barberini ivory on purely stylistic grounds have surely illustrated already that for this period at any rate we should simply accept that there was no simple chronological development of style. The combination of the classical and Byzantine is still very noticeable in many fields — one has only to think of the histories of Procopius and Agathias, or of Agathias' contemporary *Cycle* of epigrams — and nothing is more likely than that the same mixture of themes and styles should be apparent in visual art.

A part, certainly, of the explanation should be sought in the differentiation of genre, for the genre would inevitably dictate the style in certain cases. Just as Agathias would search out for his *Cycle* the most classical epigrams that the sixth century could produce, so the same writer could, when appropriate, compose an epigram for an ex-voto, or a theologically advanced dedication to an archangel<sup>169</sup>. In the same way the Great Palace would be decorated with hunting scenes, while a church, if it had figural decoration at all, would need a more spiritual theme. Yet there might be a vogue even in churches for mosaic floors with secular iconography<sup>169a</sup>; likewise there is no reason to suppose that the Romanising subjects of lost Imperial art works such as the Chalce mosaic would necessarily be treated in a classical or naturalistic manner. The San Vitale mosaics from Ravenna, Italianate though they may be, show us that Imperial art could already take a linear and 'Byzantine' form. We have now learned from Corippus that the Imperial ideology, even while embracing the most traditional and Roman themes, was itself pervaded through and through by the sort of symbolism and otherworldliness more usually associated with religious art and thought. What may seem purely classical or naturalistic therefore may yet be susceptible of an inter-

<sup>169</sup> AP, 1, 35, 34.

<sup>169a</sup> WEITZMANN, *Mosaic Pavements* (n. 11).

pretation in terms of hidden meanings: the coexistence of classical and 'Byzantine' styles is not after all to be seen as a dichotomy between two extremes, nor is it to be explained by external factors such as provenance or genre, but by a much more subtle change in thought and attitudes. How the rising popularity of icon-worship was connected with this change is the real question that still needs to be faced<sup>170</sup>.

Change there certainly was, and we may see here some degree of divergence between what was fashionable in court or official circles and the taste of the masses. It is not very likely that the man in the East Roman street, to use Baynes's phrase<sup>171</sup>, would have understood either Justin's Roman motifs or Corippus's exposition of them. As we have been shown in the case of sculpture, classical subjects were constantly interpreted in terms of religious ones, particularly Old Testament themes<sup>172</sup>, and similarly representations of the pagan gods were thought to be inhabited by demons which could at any time invade those who interfered with them<sup>173</sup>. By a parallel thought process people interpreted Justin's figure of Constantinople as Aphrodite, and this seemed so shocking that John of Ephesus tells us that Tiberius II was granted a vision telling him to replace it by the Cross<sup>174</sup>. And when the unfortunate Justin went mad, his one lucid and pathetic speech in which he made Tiberius Caesar was thought by all to have been dictated to him by an angel whispering in his ear; so firmly was this believed that the pictures painted to mark the occasion all showed the angel standing between Justin and Tiberius<sup>175</sup>. Yet we should not press the idea of popular versus court taste, for most of the upper classes were just as ready to interpret their lives in terms of divine intervention as were the ordinary people. And despite the Romanising themes, Corippus presents his subject matter throughout in just this mode or

<sup>170</sup> KITZINGER, *l.c.* (n. 167), and now see P. BROWN, *A Dark-Age Crisis: Aspects of the Iconoclastic Controversy*, EHR, LXXXVIII, 1973, 1, ff.

<sup>171</sup> Byzantine Studies, 1955, 27.

<sup>172</sup> C. MANGO, *Antique Statuary and the Pagan Beholders*, DOP, XVII, 1963, 63 ff.

<sup>173</sup> Cf. EUSTATH., V. Eutychii, PG 86, 233.

<sup>174</sup> JOH. EPH., HE, 3, 14.

<sup>175</sup> THEOPHYLACT, 3, 11, 8 f.; JOH. EPH., HE, 3, 5. John of Ephesus can make Justin actually refer to the angel in his speech.

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dimension. Justin is shown whether implicitly or explicitly as the servant of God and the *imago Christi*. Behind many of the simple descriptions there is a hidden meaning not different in type from the hidden meaning by which much contemporary art had to be understood<sup>176</sup>. Corippus concentrates inevitably on official themes, and leaves out completely (certainly deliberately) the elaborate Old Testament analogies so fundamental to contemporary thought and art<sup>177</sup>. Yet his method too is the method of symbol; the world is viewed through a series of multiple meanings, where an object represented in art or described in literature can bear an inner significance which does not need to be spelt out. Thus the Tree of Life<sup>178</sup>, the phoenix<sup>179</sup>, the star and sun images<sup>180</sup> are all used in art and literature alike. If Corippus does not use the more familiar religious symbols — the Good Shepherd<sup>181</sup>, the Lamb of God — it is only because of the nature of his subject matter. The official themes — triumph, piety, majesty — are treated no more realistically than the religious; they too are conceived from the start within a complex framework of several different levels of meaning. To achieve his effect Corippus uses several different means — straight forward simile and metaphor among them. But possibly the most noticeable feature of the poem is the sheer unity of effect, brought about certainly at times by heavy handed repetition but nevertheless producing an overwhelming impression of order and connection between earth and heaven, concentrated above all in the person of the emperor.

Corippus cannot tell us anything directly about the tran-

<sup>176</sup> See VAN DER MEER, *Early Christian Art*, *passim*, for an interesting exposition of this. Also see MATHEW, *Byzantine Aesthetics*, 78 f.

<sup>177</sup> See e.g. VAN DER MEER, *passim*; GRABAR, *Christian Iconography. A Study of its Origins*, Princeton 1968, 37 ff. For an interesting treatment of such Biblical analogy as found in the mosaics of San Vitale at Ravenna see O. SIMSON, *Sacred Fortress. Byzantine Art and Statecraft in Ravenna*, Chicago 1948, 23 ff.

<sup>178</sup> *Par. Anast.* 7-25.

<sup>179</sup> *JUST.*, 1, 349 f.

<sup>180</sup> Sun: 149 above; Stars: 2, 288 f.; 3, 182 f., 288 f.; 4, 245 f. For these and other such symbols used in mosaic see M. VAN BERCHEM and E. CLOUZOT, *Mosaïques chrétiennes du IV<sup>e</sup> au X<sup>e</sup> siècle*, Geneva 1924, and cf. e.g. GRABAR, *Christian Iconography*, 112 ff.

<sup>181</sup> Though cf. 4, 188 f. VENANTIUS FORTUNATUS, for example, by contrast constantly uses such phraseology of bishops etc., e.g. 4, 2, 9 f., 3, 2 f. etc.

sition from a more natural and realistic style to an abstract and linear one. But he can help us to see how the atmosphere was changing, how people were applying even to traditional and Roman subjects a wider and more symbolic interpretation, and thus how likely it was that the search for the inner reality inherent in icon worship should take hold. And traditionalist though Justin was in some ways, his Roman revival was not destined to last long. The Theotokos and the saints were taking over the protection of Byzantium, with Justin's own encouragement, and by the reign of Heraclius, when the icon of the Virgin stood on the gates of Constantinople to deliver the city from the Avar siege, George of Pisidia could say finally that the pagan Victory had been superseded by the Mother of God, who 'alone knows how to conquer'<sup>182</sup>.

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<sup>182</sup> *Bell. Avar.*, 1-9. For the development of the idea of Constantinople as specially protected by the Theotokos (which does not occur in Corippus) see A. FROLOW, *La dédicace de Constantinople dans la tradition byzantine*, *Rev. de l'hist. des religions*, CXXVII, 1944, esp. 94 ff.

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b) The Cross of Justin II, Vatican Treasury, Rome.



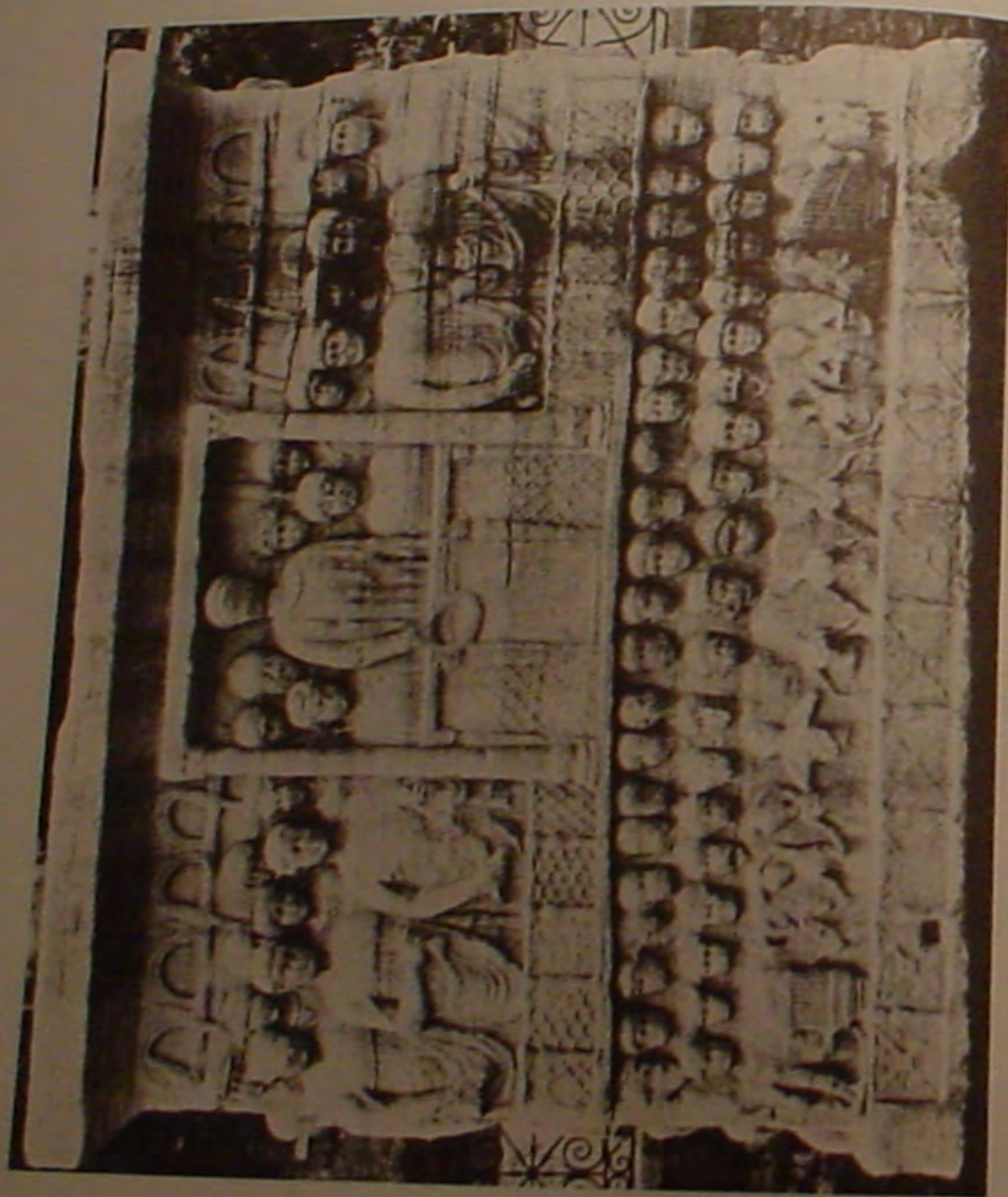
a) Diptychs on an empress, Florence, Museo Nazionale and Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum.



The Barberini ivory, Paris, Louvre. Cliché des Musées Nationaux.

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The Obelisk of Theodosius, S E face (Photo, German Archaeological Institute).



b) Marble roundel of an emperor, Dumbarton Oaks Collection.



a) The Stupa of Justin II, dated by stamp to the reign of Justin II, Archaeological Museum, Istanbul.

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Base of column of Arcadius (from a 16<sup>th</sup> century drawing).



Ivory, Cathedral Treasury, Trier (Photo, Bildarchiv Marburg).

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## VII

ANTH. PLAN 72:

### A PROPAGANDA POEM FROM THE REIGN OF JUSTIN II

Ἄλλον ὑπὲρ νίκης Ἰρηνήρου Ἰνδοθι Σούσαν  
ὃ θρασὺς ἀναστήσει Μήδος ἀνακτι τύπον·  
ἄλλον ἀκαιρικῶς Ἀβάρων στρατὸς ἐκτοθεν Ἰστρου  
καίρας ἰκ κεφαλῆς βόστροχον αὐσταλῆς·  
τὸν δ' ὑπὲρ εὐνομίας Ἰριθηλίας ἐνθάδε τοῦτον  
ἰξ ὑπάτου μίτρης στήσιν ἀνασσα πόλις.  
ἱμπεδος ἄλλὰ μένοις, Βυζαντίος ἱμμορὶ Ῥώμα,  
θεῖον Ἰουστίνου κάρτος ἀμειψαμένα.

(APL 72)

Εἰς εἰκόνα Ἰουστινιανοῦ βασιλέως. Pl. IV<sup>b</sup> 4, 5 f. 97<sup>r</sup>. - 1. Ἰρηνήρου ἢ Ἰρηνήριος? - ou? 7. ἱμμορ Pl. ἱμμορ Brunck. 8. Ἰουστινιανὸς Pl., def. Beckby. Ἰουστίνου Brunck.

"The bold Mede will set up one statue within Susa to our ruler for his victory, wearing the spoils; the long-haired army of Avars another beyond the Hister, cutting a lock from their sun-dried head. This one the ruling city set up here as a result of his consulship, to commemorate flourishing justice. Now stand firm, blessed Byzantine Rome, and repay the divine might of Justin."

This anonymous poem appears in the middle of a group of inscriptional epigrams. It can be securely dated to 566 A.D., the first year of the reign of Justin II. Planudes' Ἰουστινιανὸς in the last line is impossible on metrical grounds, and Brunck's Ἰουστίνου is made certain by the reference in ll. 5-6 to the restored consulship. The *terminus post quem* for the poem is 558, when the Avars first appeared in Constantinople;<sup>1</sup> but further, it could not date to the last years of Justinian's reign, 558-565, for the consulship had been last heard of in that reign in 541, after which it had fallen out of regular use. Justin II, however, went back to the practice (which later Emperors were to follow) of taking the consulship himself on the Kalends of January in the year of his accession. Coming as it did after the ending of the regular consulate, his decision was a positive step, and he advertised it as the restoration of ancient usage; Corippus makes him say

"ditabo plebes opibus, nomenque negatum  
consulibus consul post tempora multa novabo,  
gaudeat ut totus Justiniani munere mundus".<sup>2</sup>

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Justin took the consulship again in 568, but this time it was not advertised,<sup>3</sup> and it is likely on other grounds that our poem belongs to the context of his first consulship in 566. For it was at the end of 565, only seven days after his accession, that Justin abruptly dismissed the Avar embassy which had come to ask for a continuance of the subsidy paid to them by Justinian.<sup>4</sup> In this poem we have an extravagantly optimistic commemoration of the beginning of Justin's reign. Because the Avar embassy was sent packing they are envisaged as a broken people; in the same way Corippus represents their embassy as a token of submission instead of what it was, a demand for money - "Avarum gens. . . imperio subiecta tuo, servitū parata, | in media supplex defuit crinibus aula | exorat pacem".<sup>5</sup> Because Justin displayed the same brusqueness in his dealings with Persia, giving rise, as Menander says,<sup>6</sup> to a prevailing opinion that he was μέλλο ὑπερβῆναι τὴν καὶ κατηγεγυῖσθαι, the writer of *API* 72 imagines that they are wholly defeated; in the same way, again, Agathias, writing not much later, can refer to ἡγεῖσθαι ἀναλκῆς (*API* V.3.49), giving to Justin the credit for the peace with Persia made in 561, and wilfully exaggerating the element of Persian submission implied by it.<sup>7</sup> And because Justin made much of restoring the consulate as an outward sign of a moral reform, the poem makes Constantinople thank him for bringing εὐνομία.

The poem is as much a piece of propaganda for Justin II as Corippus' *Laudes Justinii*. Corippus makes the Emperor claim that together with his donatives he will bring peace and justice to Constantinople: "tranquillam faciam securis civibus urbem".<sup>8</sup> Like the exhortation at the end of *API* 72, this passage of Corippus goes on to urge the people to justice. It culminates in the announcement of Justin's coming consulate, at which, Corippus assures us, the people burst into astonished and delighted applause. When he is actually describing Justin's entry into his consulate, Corippus represents the senate as acclaiming the Emperor in words which link the idea of the consulship with that of the restoration of virtue - "libertatis apex, mundi caput, unica virtus | et rerum manifesta salus, reparator opimi | nominis. antiquis redeunt nova saecula fastis".<sup>9</sup> There was a feeling of hope being put about after the difficulties of the last years of Justinian. If we can believe Corippus, Justin laid even more stress on this than is natural at the start of any new reign, for he actually refers openly to the financial straits to which the negligence of Justinian had reduced the state. We are familiar with this from Procopius, and from Agathias, usually so uncritical,<sup>10</sup> but it is surprising to find it openly described so soon after Justinian's death. But there is a point in this frankness, for Justin makes it the starting point for his promise of a "new deal" which at the time may well have sounded convincing enough - "quod minus ob senium factumve actumve parentis, tempore Justinii correctum guadeat orbis" and "illa tamen sancti mecum est benedictio patris | quae totum reparare potest et lapsa novare".<sup>11</sup>

We must then set the poem within the context of the new hopes of 566, well before Justin's second consulship, which would have done something to take the shine off his first, and before the fortunes of the Avars rose with their alliance with the Lombards. It contains, in fact, a striking parallel with a passage in Agathias' *History*. Agathias is talking about the Merovingian kings: ἀκαρκεῖς δὲ . . . εἶσιν ἐκ ποδῶν δαί . . . οὐ μὴν ὡς περ οἱ τῶν Τούρκων τε καὶ Ἀβάρων ἀπέκρητοι καὶ αὐχμηροὶ καὶ θυμῶντες καὶ λυγροὶ ἀπράγως ἀναπαυμένοντες, ἀλλὰ ῥύματα γὰρ ἐπιβάλλοντες αὐτοῖς ποικίλα, καὶ ἐς τὸ ἀκριβὲς διαστίνουσιν (*Hist.* I.3, p. 19.19 Bonn "They never cut their hair at all from childhood on. . . yet their hair is not untended and dry and dirty, like that of the Turks and the Avars, for they anoint it with all kinds of dressings, and comb it very carefully"). We know that when the Avars were first seen in Constantinople in 558 their long hair caused a sensation,<sup>12</sup> so it might not in itself be surprising if when Agathias had occasion to speak of long hair<sup>13</sup> he should think of the Avars, nor even that he should describe their hair as "dry" (cf. αὐστολή). But it can hardly be coincidental that he uses the word ἀκαρκεῖς, a rare word, and, what is more, a rare form as against the regular Nonnan form ἀκαρκεῖας. He tells us that he did not turn to history until after the accession of Justin II (*Hist.* pref., p. 11.3 Bonn), and it is unlikely that he actually began writing much before 570, especially if, as we have argued elsewhere,<sup>14</sup> he did not publish his *Cycle* of epigrams until 567 or 568. Perhaps then Agathias

himself is the author of *API* 72, and recalled its phraseology at an appropriate place in his *History*. It would be interesting, in that case, to find even more obvious here the similarity with Corippus' poem on the accession of Justin II which is noticeable in Agathias' preface to his *Cycle*.<sup>15</sup> Further, the inclusion of Persia, not mentioned by Corippus, would be paralleled in this very preface. In view of what can be seen of his political outlook in the *History* it would not be out of character for Agathias to fall into line with the official propaganda of the reign - indeed, the *Cycle* itself seems to have been turned into a compliment to Justin II, even if not originally conceived for that purpose.

The poem is at best not very happily expressed, and it has come to us in a defective text. All the same, it is clearly a literary production. Its vocabulary is obscure and learned (cf. ἱρηνήροον<sup>16</sup>, ἀκαρκεῖας, αὐστολή, ἐπιβλήσις) and it affects a superficial Doric tinge (cf. *API* 118, by Paul the Silentiary). In view of these signs of careful composition it seems not impossible that ἔμμοι should be read for Planudes' mistaken ἔμμοι, nor that it should have been extended to mean 'fortunate' on the analogy of its opposite, δυσμοῖ. Hesychius at least knew ἔμμοι in something like this sense, and it would be only natural for it to be corrupted here into the familiar ἔμμοι. Metrically the poem observes the accentual rules followed by Nonnus and his school, e.g. having no proparoxytone word before the caesura of the pentameter or before the masculine caesura in the hexameter, and having no oxytone word either before the masculine caesura or at the end of the hexameter. At first sight it might seem unusual in having no lines with feminine caesurae; but cf. *AP* VII.596 (all 3 masculine), V.296 (2 out of 3 masculine), VII.551 (3 out of 4), IX.155 (3 out of 4), IX.677 (2 out of 3). All these poems are by Agathias. According to Maas,<sup>17</sup> Paul the Silentiary always made the sixth element disyllabic in hexameter lines with masculine caesura and bucolic diaeresis; line 7 here has a monosyllabic 6th element, but this again can be paralleled from Agathias' other poems.<sup>18</sup> Moreover, it is interesting to see that in *API* 80 Agathias uses the phrase Βυζαντινὸς ἔμμοι Ρωμαῖς, which exactly parallels Βυζαντινὸς ἔμμοι Ρωμαῖς in line 7 of 72.

Even if Agathias himself is not the author, however,<sup>19</sup> the poem was evidently written just at the time when he was collecting epigrams for his *Cycle*. It is quite possible that he would have included in the *Cycle* a poem so much in keeping with the tone of his own preface (*AP* IV.3), especially if it was a poem which struck him sufficiently for him to remember it and imitate it later. If it was in the *Cycle*, it would not be the only *Cycle* poem to have come into the Anthology by a separate route - perhaps, as the placing of the poem in Planudes' collection suggests, ultimately from the inscription itself. Something similar may have happened in the case of *AP* I.36, a poem by Agathias on a painting of Theodorus, Master of the Offices from 567 on.<sup>20</sup> And Agathias' epigram on the bridge over the Sangarios has been preserved in three ways, once within a set of *Cycle* poems included by Cephalas, where it is attributed to Agathias (*AP* IX.641), once by Constantine Porphyrogenitus and once by Zonaras.<sup>21</sup> Constantine clearly derived it from the actual inscription, where Agathias' name, it seems, was not included, for Constantine does not give an author. Zonaras, however, who does give Agathias' name, seems to have used a copy of the *Cycle* or an anthology source.<sup>22</sup>

If these suggestions are right, we perhaps have in *Anth. Plan.* 72 another poem from the *Cycle* dating precisely to the first year of the reign of Justin II. Like the preface to the *Cycle*, it conforms to the ideology of the reign and demonstrates again that the *Cycle* was published not under the great Justinian but under his less fortunate successor, Justin II.



# VII

## NOTES

- 1 E. Stein, *Histoire du Bas-Empire* II (1949) 542.
- 2 *Laud. Just.* ii. 351 f.
- 3 Cf. Stein, "Post-consulat et αὐτοκρατορία", *Mélanges Bidez* II (1934) 869 f.
- 4 Cf. Corippus, *op. cit.* iii. 231 f., Menander, fr. 14, Joh. Eph. HE vi. 24.
- 5 *Op. cit.*, pref., 4 f.; and cf. Corippus' description of the stupefaction of the Avars at Justin's rebuff - iii. 399 f.
- 6 Fr. 15 and 16.
- 7 Cf. § III of our article appearing in *JHS* 86 (1966). The writer of AP IX. 810 refers to a monument in gold set up by Justin II and Sophia δὲν Ἀνατολίῳ ἐπιστάθου.
- 8 *Op. cit.* ii. 339.
- 9 iv. 135 f.
- 10 Cf. *Hist.* v. 14, p. 306 Bonn.
- 11 *Laud. Just.* ii. 263 f., and cf. iii. 76-7 where Corippus makes the people say that at Justin's accession the aged world has grown young again ("post senium sese iuvenescere mundus / gaudet, et antiquae repetit primordia formae").
- 12 Malal. 489 B, Theoph., AM 6050. All who mention the Avars comment on their hair; so Menander fr. 14, Corippus, *op. cit.*, pref. 4 f., Joh. Eph. HE iii. 25. Cf. A. Alföldi, *Eurasia septentrionalis antiqua*, 9 (1934) 291 f., O. Maenchen-Helfen, *Byzantion* 17 (1944-5) 236.
- 13 For the value of Agathias' testimony here see Averil Cameron, *Rev. belge de philologie et d'histoire* 44 (1965) 1203 f.
- 14 *Art. cit.* (see note 7 above).
- 15 *Ibid.*
- 16 Compare *API*. 62.3 Νίκην ἀντιστοιχίζον ἄλλην (a statue).
- 17 *Greek Metre* (tr. Lloyd-Jones, Oxford 1962) § 93.
- 18 E.g. AP V. 297.7, VI. 59.1, 76.1, 167.5, 172.1, VII. 204.7, 552.9, 583.7, 589.3, 596.3, 614.5, IX. 154.5, 155.3, 5, 482.1 etc.
- 19 And fitting names to the adespota in the Greek Anthology is not the most profitable of occupations - cf. A. S. F. Gow, *The Greek Anthology: Sources and Ascriptions*, London, 1958, p. 43, R. Reitzenstein, *RE* VI. 74.
- 20 Cf. *art. cit.* (n. 7) § 11.
- 21 Const. Porph., *de them.* p. 27 Bonn, Zonaras xiv. 7.
- 22 See Averil Cameron, "Notes on the Sophias, the Sophianae and the Harbour of Sophia", forthcoming in *Byzantion*.



## THE CAREER OF CORIPPUS AGAIN

Among other recent attempts to correct what he takes to be Cameronian misconceptions, Barry Baldwin has reopened the question of a difficult passage in the panegyric to Anastasius the quaestor prefaced to Corippus' *In laudem Iustini*.<sup>1</sup> His discussion perfectly correctly emphasizes the fragility of our knowledge of Corippus' life and background, but unfortunately it introduces certain misconceptions itself which make a rejoinder inescapable, especially since new arguments may be adduced.

It is best to start from the beginning, with the *Iobannis*. A commentary on this poem is long overdue and may perhaps be stimulated by the current publicity which Corippus is enjoying.<sup>2</sup> In the meantime, it ought certainly to be possible to locate the poem more firmly in the background of post-reconquest Byzantine Africa. John Troglita, the general whose exploits the *Iobannis* records, is, to Baldwin, a 'shadowy figure'.<sup>3</sup> True, it is mere surmise that he might have recommended Corippus to Justinian, but someone clearly did introduce him to the court, for the *In laudem Iustini* shows him tackling the most central imperial subject with all the confidence of an insider. He could hardly have approached it in so knowledgeable and indeed tendentious a way<sup>4</sup> unless there were more to his claims to have the patronage of senior officials close to the throne than Baldwin is prepared to admit.<sup>5</sup> There is no clear reason why Justinian would particularly wish to reward the poet on his own account', Baldwin writes;<sup>6</sup> but Justinian was constantly engaged in an attempt — all too often unsuccessful — to find panegyrists, and if Corippus had found his way to Constantinople, as he somehow did, there is no way that he would have failed to be solicited by the imperial office.<sup>7</sup> Baldwin's scepticism, in fact, seems to be misplaced, for he is

<sup>1</sup> 'The Career of Corippus', *CQ* N.S. 28 (1978), 372-6; cf. also 'Four Problems in Agathias', *Byz. Zeit.* 70 (1977), 295-305, and 'A Note on the Religious Sympathies of the Factions', *Byzantion* 48 (1978), 275-6.

<sup>2</sup> Besides the edition of the *Iobannis* by J. Diggle and F. R. D. Goodyear (Cambridge, 1970), those of the *In laudem Iustini* by Averil Cameron (London, 1976) and U. J. Stache (Berlin, 1976). A Budé edition is promised also by S. Antès.

<sup>3</sup> *CQ* N.S. 28 (1978), 373; page-references henceforth to Baldwin's work relate to this article unless otherwise specified. John remained *magister militum Africae* until at least A.D. 552, after which date he may have soon died (C. Diehl, *L'Afrique byzantine* (1896), p. 381). The recent work of Denys Pringle on military campaigns and fortification in Byzantine Africa (Oxford D.Phil. thesis, 1979) sheds much light on Corippus' description of John Troglita's campaigns.

<sup>4</sup> Especially shown in his delicate handling of the element of senatorial coup in Justin's accession and inauguration. The

poem generally is written as an apologia for Justin.

<sup>5</sup> p. 375. Baldwin questions whether Corippus' claim to have the support of Anastasius, Thomas, the praetorian prefect of Africa, Magnus the *comes sacrarum largitionum*, Theodorus the son of Peter the Patrician and himself *magister officiorum* in A.D. 566, and a certain Demetrius (*Iust.* 1.15-27: there may have been more — the passage ends in a lacuna) is more than literary convention. But the point is that these are the men who put Justin on the throne and whose version Corippus is (presumably) paid to publicize.

<sup>6</sup> p. 373.

<sup>7</sup> It may seem equally unlikely that Procopius, as the author of the *Wars*, should have seemed suitable as a panegyrist of Justinian's buildings. But the experience of John the Lydian (*De Mag.* 3.28) makes clear Justinian's natural desire to win the services of any likely literary talent. Imperial panegyric themes in the *kontakia* of Romanos have recently been emphasized

on the contrary prepared to take the preface to the *Iobannis* at face value, despite its obvious literary *topoi*, using Corippus' claim to be *ignarus* as proof that he could not have been a teacher.<sup>8</sup> I am not sure why Baldwin is so reluctant to accept the common meaning of *grammaticus*; but in any case the argument will not be advanced by a too literal understanding of the references to Corippus' *rustica Musa* and the like.<sup>9</sup> We know nothing of Corippus' place of origin, or his social background, but it is unlikely that the *topos* of modesty is more than exactly that. We may perhaps accept that he did not originate in Carthage, and feels nervous in the presence of its now Byzantine *proceres*,<sup>10</sup> but the stronger contrast in the preface is the literary one between the *rustica Musa* of Africa and the *Romanae Camenae*, the poetry of Virgil, with which he has already adversely compared his *Iobannis*.<sup>11</sup> It is a pleasant thought that Corippus might have been a 'wandering poet'.<sup>12</sup> But the literary output of Byzantine Africa in the mid-sixth century is in fact overwhelmingly ecclesiastical, which makes this idea rather less probable, if indeed poets could not also be *grammatici*.<sup>13</sup> 'Wandering poets' need patrons, and we know too little about cultural conditions after the reconquest to allow the supposition that such patrons now existed. The situation was very unsettled for a generation after the reconquest; the Vandal patrons had left, and the Byzantine administrators who replaced them had little time for occasional poetry — military panegyric might be different.<sup>14</sup> The efflorescence of poetic activity represented by Luxorius and his contemporaries under the Vandals cannot be documented under the new regime.

However, the victories of John Troglita, with his triumphal entry into Carthage thereafter, described by Corippus in a memorable passage inviting comparison with the near-contemporary descriptions of the entry of Theodoric to Rome in A.D. 500 and the return of Fulgentius and other Catholic exiles to

by E. Catafygiotu Topping ('On earthquakes and fires', *Byz. Zeit.* 71 (1978), 22-35). Corippus did not produce any work in honour of Justinian and perhaps indeed it was not Justinian who granted him this favour — see below.

<sup>8</sup> p. 372.

<sup>9</sup> *Iobannis*, pref., lines 25 f.: 'quid <quod ego> ignarus quondam per rura locutus, furbis per populos carmina mitto palam? forsitan et fracto ponetur syllaba versu, confiteor: Musa est rustica namque mea.'

<sup>10</sup> line 1: 'Victoris, proceres, praesumpsi dicere laudes...'. The name Cresconius is well represented among Christians in Roman Africa. J. L. Maier, *L'Épiscopat de l'Afrique romaine, vandale et byzantine* (Rome, 1973), pp. 280 ff., records two mid-sixth-century Numidian bishops of that name, plus a Cresconius at the end of the sixth century and twenty-two or possibly twenty-three Cresconii among bishops present at the Council of Carthage in A.D. 411. We may be sure then of the poet's Christian and African background; equally there is no reason to attempt to identify him with the

Cresconius who was the author of *Canones*, as one scribe does (see Patsch, ed., 1879, p. xliii). Names in -ius among African Christians — see I. Kajanto, *Onomastic Studies in the early Christian Inscriptions of Rome and Carthage* (Helsinki, 1963).

<sup>11</sup> 37-8: 'rustica Romanis dum certat Musa Camenis, ductorem nostrum fama per astra vehit.' Cf. 11 ff. and especially 15-16: 'Aeneam superat melior virtute Iohannes, sed non Vergilio carmina digna cano.'

<sup>12</sup> Baldwin, p. 372.

<sup>13</sup> Literary energies went now more readily into opposing Justinian's attempt to enforce his position on the Three Chapters than into the occasional poetry which had provided a 'safe' because non-political outlet for some Romans under Vandal occupation.

<sup>14</sup> First Belisarius, then Solomon set about restoring imperial rule and administration with great vigour, but in the years between the reconquest (A.D. 534) and the arrival of John Troglita (A.D. 546) the Byzantines were faced with military mutiny as well as Berber warfare. See Diehl, op. cit., pp. 51 ff., 33 ff.



Carthage in A.D. 523,<sup>15</sup> provided an opportunity for panegyric of a very specialized kind, which tells us nothing about the more usual preoccupations of its author. Historians of North Africa have long recognized the *Iobannis* as a primary and reliable source for Berber customs, warfare, and African topography, even allowing for literary vagueness and mannerism.<sup>16</sup> But what this tells us about Corippus himself remains more doubtful, save that the *Iobannis* displays the same eager and detailed research that is everywhere displayed in the *In laudem Iustini*. The earlier work has been admired, up to a point, for its technical proficiency, at least in comparison with the later one;<sup>17</sup> but it also calls for a sympathetic interpretation which will do justice both to the African literary background and to the historical value of its ethnography.

When Baldwin turns to his main argument, which is based on the *In laudem Iustini*, it is true that we have to contend with the fact that the poet has not been explicit; moreover, that he has used misleadingly similar terminology in the preface and in the panegyric to Anastasius for different things. If we begin with the panegyric, it is at least clear that Corippus is now old — 'senio dextram, pie, porrige fesso'<sup>18</sup> — and, apparently, not prospering — 'vince meae/saevam fortunae, deprecor, iram'.<sup>19</sup> Corippus uses an extended metaphor of the emperor as healer,<sup>20</sup> and suggests that his poem will be Justin's reward, if he gives his aid.<sup>21</sup> Line 43 describes Corippus as 'nudatus propriis et plurima vulnera passus'. What is this suffering? In the panegyric to Anastasius Corippus uses the same terminology and asks the quaestor to take pity on his tired old age and heal his wounds. On the face of it, he is still in trouble, for he asks Anastasius, 'causam defende meam'.<sup>22</sup> But that 'nudatus propriis' means that Corippus had lost property in Africa<sup>23</sup> is no more than a guess, and I would argue against this interpretation on the grounds that in the panegyric to Anastasius Corippus seems to be making a contrast between the happy state of Africa thanks to the influence of Anastasius<sup>24</sup> and his own situation, still in need of assistance. 'You have made Africa happy, now make me happy' is the way the sense runs in lines 36–41. We do not know the circumstances, then. But to prove himself worthy of Anastasius' attention Corippus advances an imperial order ('sacri apices . . . sanctio').<sup>25</sup> He is already

<sup>15</sup> Corippus, *Iob.* 6.58–103; John led a procession which included Berber women riding on camels with their babies. Compare Ferrandus, *Vita Fulgentii* (ed. Lapeyre, 1929), 9 (Theodoric), 26 (Fulgentius).

<sup>16</sup> See S. Gsell, *Histoire ancienne de l'Afrique du Nord* vi (Paris, 1927), 24 ff.; E. F. Gautier, *L'Islamisation de l'Afrique du Nord* (Paris, 1927), pp. 172 ff.; Ch. Julien, *Histoire de l'Afrique du Nord* i, 2nd edn. (Paris, 1956), 263 ff.

<sup>17</sup> Though I am glad to find that D. R. Shackleton Bailey shares my own higher opinion of the panegyric (*Gnomon* 50 (1978), 449). Opinions of Corippus' worth tend to split between those of most editors, who view him from the linguistic point of view (e.g. Goodyear, *CR* 28 (1978), 257–8), and historians, who appreciate the value of his subject matter.

<sup>18</sup> *Pref.*, line 37.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, 41.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, 44–8. For this metaphor, see Topping, art. cit. (n. 7), p. 26 f. (the image of Christ the physician, but in the context of a quasi-imperial panegyric).

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, 48, 'pro munere carmina porto'.

<sup>22</sup> *Pan. Anast.* 45. Cf. 48–9 'fessae miserere senectae/vulneribusque meis solita pietate medere'.

<sup>23</sup> Baldwin, p. 375, following Partsch.

<sup>24</sup> Lines 37 f. Cf. *Iust.* 1.18–21 on the recent benefits of Thomas's rule in Africa.

<sup>25</sup> Lines 42–6: 'quod labor indulsit, quod fessis provida Musis/alma per insomnes meruit vigilantia noctes, hi sacri monstrant apices. lege, summe magister/et causam defende meam. tibi sanctio vestrum/com-mendat famulum'.

Anastasius's *famulus*, a *rivulus* from his *fons*,<sup>26</sup> and 'in his name' he holds an imperial office ('sub cuius nomine gesto/principis officium').<sup>28</sup> *Gesto*, especially with *officium*, has a specialized meaning in late Latin of 'office-holding' (*TLL* s.v. IIB). Anastasius, then, I take to be the head of bureau to whom the emperor has recommended Corippus. With his support, Corippus can offer his poem, as a kind of 'payment' to the emperor for his appointment.<sup>28</sup> *Hi* used with *sacri apices* can then be explained as a true demonstrative: Corippus' reference is to a recent pronouncement, i.e. a letter of Justin II, not of Justinian, as was previously supposed by Partsch and Skutsch and by myself. If we understand the passage this way we do not need to suppose that Corippus is alluding to a much earlier reward offered by Justinian for his *Iobannis*; *hi* becomes natural and Baldwin's objection that we would have expected such a decree to be mentioned in the preface to Justin II can also be easily met.

It would be nice to see this, in fact, in the context of an understandable effort by the new regime to gain the support of available poetic talent. The whole circumstances of Justin's accession are proof of a deliberate *coup* which needed careful preparation, and Corippus' panegyric will have been one of the major assets in implanting the persuasion of the inevitability of the transfer and glossing over the prompt murder of Justin's rival, his homonym Justin the son of Germanus.<sup>29</sup> Another such asset would have been the publication of Agathias' *Cycle* of epigrams, now provided with a panegyric preface.<sup>30</sup> Now Baldwin has also recently argued for a return to the traditional idea that Agathias' preface to the *Cycle* refers to Justinian.<sup>31</sup> But in supposing that the *Cycle* as a whole was published under Justinian he has overlooked those poems in it which are actually about Justin II and Sophia.<sup>32</sup> Further, it seems perverse to separate Agathias' preface from the preface of Corippus' *In laudem Iustini*, which is closely similar. True, it is not proven that they had the same object, and it is obviously possible that Agathias' preface could, were it not for the poems just mentioned, refer to Justinian.<sup>33</sup> But the easy and natural assumption is that the two prefaces *did* have the same object. We are now in a far better position than previously to fill in the history of Justin II's reign, and in particular to see how ready the court was to exploit different ways of reinforcing the rule of Justin.<sup>34</sup>

It will be clear that Baldwin's return to Foggini's interpretation of the passage in the panegyric to Anastasius<sup>35</sup> must be rejected. In the first place, it is out of the question to separate *sacri* from *apices*. *Sacer* is by no means a 'vague and overlooked epithet' in Corippus;<sup>36</sup> it is a technical term, one of the commonest and most specific of Corippus's epithets. When Baldwin adds 'because *sacri apices* in some texts means imperial decrees does not in the least guarantee that it does or should mean the same in Corippus'<sup>37</sup> he misses the fact that Corippus

<sup>26</sup> Lines 46–7: 'vestro de fonte creatur/rivulus iste meus'.

<sup>27</sup> Lines 47–8.

<sup>28</sup> *Pref.*, 48.

<sup>29</sup> Evagrius, *H. E.* 5.2; Joh. Biclar., s.2. 568 [sic]; see my note on *Iust.* 1.1.

<sup>30</sup> *A. P.* 4.3.

<sup>31</sup> *Byz. Zeit.* 70 (1977), 298–301.

<sup>32</sup> *A. P.* 9.657, 658–9, 812–13; 1.36 is probably relevant too. See Averil and Alan Cameron, 'The Cycle of Agathias', *JHS* 86 (1966), 6–25. Various claims made in this

article were challenged by R. C. McCail, *JHS* 89 (1969), 87–96, but not the dating.

<sup>33</sup> Baldwin, art. cit., p. 301.

<sup>34</sup> See e.g. Averil Cameron, 'The Early Religious Policies of Justin II', *Studies in Church History* (1976), 51–7. 'The Artistic Patronage of Justin II', *ibid.* (forthcoming).

<sup>35</sup> *CQ N.S.* 28 (1978), 373 f. So too

Stache, *comm. ad loc.*

<sup>36</sup> Baldwin, p. 373.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*



writes in a kind of self-created technical language (hence my practice of translating such words literally)<sup>38</sup> and that *sacri* in the *In laudem Iustini* always means imperial. The only question is whether *apices* must mean a letter. Here I am most grateful to Professor Eric Turner for drawing my attention to a text which proves my interpretation. The first document in the Abinnaeus archive, the famous petition of Abinnaeus to the Emperors Constantius and Constans of A.D. 340-2,<sup>39</sup> sheds all the light that one could wish on the usage of Corippus. Abinnaeus had won imperial favour in return for services rendered in the shape of presenting a mission of Blemyes to the court in Constantinople and then escorting them back to their own country, a task which took him three years to complete. An imperial letter had gone to Count Valacius in Egypt, favouring Abinnaeus for the post of *praefectus alae* at Dionysias in the Fayyûm; but unfortunately for Abinnaeus, other letters had also been received, putting forward the claims of different candidates, and he was forced to go to the lengths of presenting a personal petition to the emperors asking them to confirm his appointment. The term *sacrae litterae*, with a reference also to *iudicium sacrum*, makes it perfectly clear that an imperial letter is in question; more important still, Abinnaeus actually writes *i[u]xta s[u]pra[dictos] ap[er]tes vestros*.<sup>40</sup> The editors explain how *apices* came to mean specifically a document written in the imperial chancellery hand, from its palaeographic characteristics.<sup>41</sup> There is simply no question that *sacri* could, when associated with *apices*, mean anything other than 'imperial'. But further, the Abinnaeus petition refers precisely to the working of patronage through imperial influence, in fact to an imperial letter conferring an appointment as a reward for past services. It would be utterly perverse to think that Corippus' reference should be differently explained. In the panegyric to Anastasius, lines 42-3 make it quite clear that Corippus has earned and received a reward:

quod labor indulsit, quod fessis provida Musis  
alma per insomnes meruit vigilantia noctes,  
hi sacri monstant apices.

The *apices*, then, attest to the reward. Corippus has received an imperial letter of appointment, and perhaps we can say that the letter was addressed to Anastasius, as Abinnaeus' letter was addressed to Valacius. Hence the next words, in which Corippus invites Anastasius to read the letter:

lege, summe magister,  
et causam defende meam. tibi sanctio vestrum  
commendat famulum.

Note especially *commendat*, the language of patronage. If confirmation is wanted, it is provided by *sanctio*, which after this exposition of *sacri apices* in the light of the Abinnaeus petition can mean nothing but what it normally does mean, namely an imperial order or law. Compare P. Abinn. 2.2 'iuxta divinitus

<sup>38</sup> Also missed by J. Richmond, *CRNS*, 28 (1978), 47-8. But for *felix*, *pious*, *laetus*, *sacer*, and *sanctus* in the *In laudem Iustini* see my notes on *Pan. Anast.* 33, 36, and 50.

<sup>39</sup> Ed. H. I. Bell, V. Martin, E. G. Turner, and D. van Berchem, *The Abinnaeus Archive* (Oxford, 1962).

<sup>40</sup> P. Abinn. 1, 13, with the editors' note (p. 37).

<sup>41</sup> Ibid., 'the letter forms of the highly idiosyncratic imperial chancellery style have given their name to the documents written in them, imperial decrees, diplomas, letters etc.'

*sanctio* — 'in virtue of orders from imperial headquarters'. The weakest point of Baldwin's paper is his attempt to explain away *sanctio*: the 'alleged exhortation by Anastasius to Corippus (to write the poem) is simply given by the flattering poet the force of an imperial command or decree'.<sup>42</sup> This last concession, tucked away in a footnote, in fact undermines Baldwin's whole argument. Nor is it possible, on his interpretation, to give any satisfactory force to 'causam defende meam': to whom, then, is Anastasius being asked to uphold Corippus? Finally, the phrase 'sub cuius nomine [i.e. Anastasius] gesto principis officium' (lines 47-8) is explained by Baldwin as a reference to the poet's duty exemplified in his verse, citing 'pro munere carmina porto' from the preface to Justin (line 48). In another context, *officium* might mean this; but on Baldwin's explanation *principis* is left hanging. The phrase would have to mean the poet's duty towards the emperor — hard enough to understand in any case, but especially so when (to borrow Baldwin's mode of argumentation and his explanation of the passage)<sup>43</sup> there has been no previous mention of the emperor at all. To accept Baldwin's interpretation of the whole passage involves questioning individual usages which when taken together have a natural and obvious meaning. The Abinnaeus story makes that meaning certain, and explains how and why Corippus needs the support of Anastasius as well as the emperor himself. Abinnaeus's petition was successful, and he obtained his appointment as *praefectus alae* from March A.D. 342. But Valacius was evidently still exposed to counter pressures, for Abinnaeus was dismissed in A.D. 344 (P. Abinn. 2); however, he was a determined man, quite prepared to make a second personal appeal to the emperor, after which he was indeed reinstated, by 1 May A.D. 346, remaining at Dionysias until at least A.D. 351.<sup>44</sup> Getting a post confirmed and keeping it could be hard work, even with imperial support. Corippus would very reasonably have felt that an imperial letter might not be enough; he would have to work on Anastasius too.

Even after this second look, however, we are forced to conclude that we know very little about Corippus' life or career. Baldwin's challenge has induced me to give up the too hasty assumption that *apices* referred to a decree of Justinian, and he is right to stress the complaints of the poet in the *In laudem Iustini*, which seem to imply that, whether or not the *Iobannis* had been a success at the time, Corippus had not attained permanent fame and prosperity. We still do not know how or why Corippus came to Constantinople or what his trouble was when he wrote the *In laudem Iustini*. But powerful men were on his side, and he was able to emerge as the poet of the new regime with as much alacrity as he had shown when he capitalized on the success of the armies of John Troglita. Corippus' most striking quality is his adaptability: first, as a Roman who had presumably lived under the Vandals, he quickly turned his pen to the service of the new Byzantine rulers, then, transplanted to the Eastern court at Constantinople, he, a Latin-speaking Westerner, wrote on behalf of the winning party in the struggle for power at the death of Justinian. The allusions in the poems will not clear up all our difficulties. But they do repay this further study, though only, as with much else in Corippus, in close relation to the social and political context of the time.

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<sup>42</sup> p. 375 n. 14. Stache also finds *sanctio* difficult (n. ad loc.).

<sup>43</sup> p. 374, cf. 375.

<sup>44</sup> Bell, Martin, Turner, van Berchem, *intro.*, pp. 11 f.

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## Early Byzantine *Kaiserkritik*: Two Case Histories

In recent studies of Byzantine political comment and particularly of opposition to imperial policy the period after Justinian has received a certain amount of space.<sup>1</sup> But the reigns of Justin II and Tiberius II are still neglected by comparison with that of their predecessor,<sup>2</sup> while the spell exercised by Procopius's *Secret History* tends to dominate all approaches to contemporary political attitudes.<sup>3</sup> The fascination of the *Secret History* for modern scholars<sup>4</sup> has, too, inclined them to look only at the negative aspects of political criticism, and to fix their attention on what seem to be 'mainstream' writers in the tradition of Procopian history.<sup>5</sup> I want here to try to

1. See F. Tinnefeld, *Kategorien der Kaiserkritik in der byzantinischen Historiographie* (Munich, 1971); B. Rubin, 'Zur Kaiserkritik Ostrostroms', *Studi bizantini e neoellenici* (Atti dell' VIII congresso internazionale di studi bizantini, Palermo, 1951), VII (1953), 453ff.; *Das Zeitalter Justinians*, I (Berlin, 1960), pp. 227ff.; Averil Cameron, *Agathias* (Oxford, 1970), pp. 124ff.

2. For Justin II see K. Groh, *Geschichte des oströmischen Kaisers Justin II nebst den Quellen*, Diss. Halle (Leipzig, 1889); E. Stein, *Studien zur Geschichte des byzantinischen Reiches, vornehmlich unter Kaisern Justinus II und Tiberius Constantinus* (Stuttgart, 1919); for Tiberius II the best account is still probably J. B. Bury, *History of the Later Roman Empire from Arcadius to Irene II* (London, 1889), pp. 79ff. [hereafter *LRE*].

3. So Tinnefeld and Rubin [n. 1].

4. See especially S. Mazzarino, *The End of the Ancient World* (Eng. trans., London, 1966), pp. 102ff. and almost all books on the age of Justinian, from Gibbon on.

5. So conspicuously Tinnefeld [n. 1]; the omission of John of Ephesus from his survey creates a serious imbalance. On Procopian history see Cameron, *Agathias* [n. 1], pp. 30ff. and *passim*.

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demonstrate the limitations of such an approach by means of an analysis of the literary sources available for these two reigns. It may be that in the end both reigns must remain imperfectly understood;<sup>6</sup> yet the policies and character of the unhappy Justin II evoked violent excesses of praise and blame and provided an inevitable foil for the well-meaning and amiable Tiberius. *Kaiserkritik* in East Rome is a concept which needs closer study, and the history of this short period demonstrates that it must be sought in a range of sources which genuinely reflects the spectrum of Byzantine life. There were certain common literary features about the critique of emperors in more formal political works; but political criticism did not confine itself to classical histories, and I suspect that the attitudes revealed by the more popular sources are more interesting and more important. Modern study of Byzantine *Kaiserkritik* has been neither sufficiently wide-ranging in scope nor sensitive enough to the interaction of genuine opinion with literary form.

This paper then falls into two sections, first a survey of the literary sources for Justin II and Tiberius (a necessary introduction in itself to a neglected period), then an attempt to indicate some of the lessons which such an analysis can teach us about the general concept of Byzantine *Kaiserkritik*.

## I

The work of certain authors is known only by allusion or from fragments. Thus one Cyrus of Batna (seemingly contemporary) wrote a history of Justin II and Tiberius in Syriac, which may have been used by the twelfth-century Michael the Syrian.<sup>7</sup> Doubtless it presented Justin from an Eastern Monophysite point of view, as a persecutor; whether it carried Michael's emphasis on Justin's moderate beginnings we cannot tell.<sup>8</sup> Then

6. So Stein, *Studien* [n. 2], p. 1.

7. See J.-B. Chabot (ed.), *Chronique de Michel le Syrien*, I (Paris, 1924), intro. p. xxxi.

8. On Michael's account of Justin's policies see W. H. C. Frend, *The Rise of the Monophysite Movement* (Cambridge, 1972), pp. 317ff.; Averil Cameron, 'The Early Religious Policies of Justin II', *Studies in Church History*, XIII (Oxford, 1976), 51-67.

Theophanes of Byzantium, as we know from Photius,<sup>9</sup> composed ten books also on Justin II and Tiberius, apparently concentrating on the Persian wars. No expression of opinion is to be found in Photius's summary, however. Evagrius tells us<sup>10</sup> that Agathias and John of Epiphaneia together continued Procopius up to A.D. 590, the year of the flight of Chosroes II to Roman territory; he seems to mean that John's narrative followed on where that of Agathias left off, that is, from A.D. 559. But the opening of John's work indicates that his main topic too will be the wars with Persia; he begins with the accession of Justin and passes quickly to the renewal of hostilities. His claim to credibility is based on having been secretary (*σύμβουλος*) to the Patriarch Gregory of Antioch and having taken part with him in the negotiations with Chosroes II and Persian leaders, even visiting Persia himself;<sup>11</sup> perhaps then his history would have been relatively limited in scope. But although most of his allusions to Justin in the extant fragments are quite neutral, he does deliver himself of one emphatic *mot*, namely that Justin's appointment of Tiberius as Caesar after the onset of illness was the best thing he ever did, and the source of great good to the empire.<sup>12</sup>

Justin, whose reign began with the murder of a rival,<sup>13</sup> who was dominated by his wife<sup>14</sup> and went mad after his reckless renewal of the war with Persia had resulted in the loss of Dara,<sup>15</sup> aroused deep hostility and contempt in many of his subjects, and for a mixture of reasons, as we shall see. But there were also those who supported the regime and the emperor, and it will be helpful to try to categorize their evidence. In the first place imperial panegyric is well represented. Agathias's *Cycle* of contemporary epigrams, now integrated into the *Palatine Anthology*, was published during this reign, and the

9. *Bibliotheca*, cod. 64 (C. Müller, *Fragmenta Historicorum Graecorum*, IV [repr. Paris, 1928], 270f.) [hereafter *FHG*].

10. *Historia Ecclesiastica*, ed. J. Bidez and L. Parmentier (London, 1898), V.24 [hereafter *HE*].

11. *FHG*, IV.273.

12. *FHG*, IV.276.

13. John of Biclar, *Chronica* (ed. Mommsen, *MGH*, auct. ant. XI [1894]), a. 568(?); Evagrius, *HE*, V.1-2; Agathias, *HE*, IV.32.

14. See Averil Cameron, 'The Empress Sophia', *B*, XII (1972), p. 21.

15. Evagrius, *HE*, V.11.



introductory poem (*AP* IV.3) must be regarded as an example of imperial panegyric addressed to Justin.<sup>16</sup> Its main themes are the seemingly inappropriate ones of victory and triumph—yet for a newly ascended emperor these depersonalized motifs were the most suitable. Not much could yet be said about Justin himself, so the poet has recourse to the set themes of Byzantine imperial ideology.<sup>17</sup> There were other, more formally correct panegyrics, in both Latin and Greek, recited in public when Justin took his first consulship on 1 January 566.<sup>18</sup> And we still possess a work that was perhaps more ambitious than these—Corippus's hybrid epic-panegyric describing Justin's accession and coronation, the Avar embassy of late November, A.D. 565, and the consular inauguration.<sup>19</sup> Like Agathias's preface, though on a far larger scale, Corippus draws on the standard imperial *topoi*, and much of the poem uses stereotypes of imperial triumph on the one hand and the emperor's relation to God on the other which would have been applicable not merely to Justin II but to *any* emperor.<sup>20</sup> It would be dangerous to use this alone from which to argue a special piety in Justin or a special emphasis on the religious side of the imperial role.<sup>21</sup> But there is material in Corippus's poem of a more realistic kind, which does give hard historical data: Justin's financial policies announced in his inauguration speech, for example,<sup>22</sup> the portrayal of his most influential supporters, Tiberius, Callinicus, Anastasius the *quaestor* and the Patriarch John Scholasticus, which tallies perfectly with the version of John of Ephesus,<sup>23</sup> the tendentious account of Justin's accession<sup>24</sup> and

16. See Averil and Alan Cameron, 'The Cycle of Agathias', *JHS*, LXXXVI (1966), 6ff.; LXXXVII (1967), 131; Cameron, *Agathias*, pp. 12ff.

17. Cameron, *Agathias*, pp. 14f.

18. Corippus, *In laudem Iustini*, IV.154f.

19. *In laudem Iustini minoris* I–IV, now edited with introduction, translation and commentary by Averil Cameron (London, 1976).

20. See especially, *Iust.*, *pref.* and II.147, f., 407f. with my notes.

21. But see below, pp. 6f.

22. Corippus, *Iust.* II.249ff.; see *Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies*, XIII (1966), 101ff. and below, p. 10.

23. Tiberius: I.212f., IV.374f.; Callinicus: I.78f., IV.332f. Anastasius: *Pan. Anast.* 26f.; John Scholasticus: II.159f. For John of Ephesus, see below, pp. 11ff.

24. I.1ff., with my notes.

the revelation of the senate's *coup* in accomplishing the inauguration procedures inside the palace so as to forestall any popular or factional demonstrations in the Hippodrome.<sup>25</sup> Corippus was hoping for favour from the powerful Anastasius; as a member of the imperial bureaucracy he was evidently writing as an eye-witness, and within a year or so of the events.<sup>26</sup> There is a good deal in the poem that is direct and authentic; but it was all written with an end in view and—to some extent at least—according to a pattern. Two more contemporary poems are also semi-official in character. Some Greek verses celebrating the arrival of an icon of Justin in Alexandria<sup>27</sup> hail Justin in conventionally panegyric terms. There is more solidity in the poem which Venantius Fortunatus wrote to thank Justin and Sophia for their gift of a fragment of the True Cross to the convent of Radegund at Poitiers.<sup>28</sup> Thus we learn from it that Justin at his accession released the exiled bishops.<sup>29</sup> But Venantius's praise of Justin's orthodoxy is in part at least merely the expected reaction of a Westerner who saw the Byzantine Emperor making a pious gesture to the Catholic Franks. Justin had ordered the Creed of Constantinople to be sung in all churches<sup>30</sup> and this must be the reference of Venantius's assertion that Justin has restored the orthodox faith;<sup>31</sup> but Venantius was already settled in Poitiers and knew the Eastern capital only from travellers' tales. His fulsome praise of the religious attitudes of Justin and Sophia must owe more to wishful thinking than to precise knowledge.

This class of favourable sources for Justin II must then be used with caution. A different strand altogether is represented by the chronicler Theophanes. For him Justin is chiefly remarkable for his piety,<sup>32</sup> which manifests itself above all in the

25. II.84ff., with notes.

26. For the date of composition see Cameron [n. 19], intro., (i); 'Notes on the Sophiae, the Sophianae and the Harbour of Sophia', *B*, XXXVII (1967), 15ff. For Corippus's position in the *scrinia* see *Pan. Anast.* 42f., with notes.

27. E. Heitsch, *Die griechische Dichterfragmente* I<sup>2</sup> (1963), XL.1.

28. *App. carm.* 2 *Ad Iustinum et Sophiam Augustos*. See Cameron [n. 8].

29. *App. carm.* 2.39f.

30. Joh. Biclar., *Chron.*, a. 567(?).

31. *App. carm.* 2.23f.

32. P. 241 (ed. de Boor); cf. Zonaras, *Epitome Historiarum*, XIV.10.



adornment of churches built by Justinian, including St. Sophia and the Holy Apostles.<sup>33</sup> On the strength of this, perhaps, Justin receives praise for his character (*μεγαλόψυχός τε καὶ εἰς πάντα ἐπιδέξιος*),<sup>34</sup> with no further comment. It was not surprising that the chronicle tradition should have picked up this theme, for Justin's patronage of religious art and building can be amply attested from the *Patria*;<sup>35</sup> he was especially associated with additions to the church at Blachernae and the provision of a reliquary for the Virgin's girdle at Chalcostrateia.<sup>36</sup> Besides the relic sent to Poitiers, he and Sophia presented a silver gilt cross to Rome, with busts of themselves on its arms and the Lamb of God in the middle.<sup>37</sup> Further, there is a distinct emphasis in this reign on religious developments, with the court apparently showing the way.<sup>38</sup> Justin was a devotee of the stylite St. Symeon the Younger, who foretold his accession to the future Patriarch John Scholasticus; the latter informed Justin and subsequently was greatly favoured by him. When Justin actually succeeded, he showed great devotion to Symeon and consulted him in everything; indeed, when Justin's daughter was possessed by a demon, the saint was able to cure her by letter.<sup>39</sup> At the same time John's predecessor and successor as Patriarch, Eutychius, also claimed to have foretold Justin's succession, and wished to 'strengthen him in the fear of God'.<sup>40</sup> But that Justin's piety was genuine is confirmed in details even by the basically hostile account of John of Ephesus, who writes on several occasions of

33. For the interpretation of Theophanes's remarks see Cameron [n. 19], note on *Iust.* IV.290f.

34. Loc. cit. [n. 32].

35. See John of Ephesus, *Historia Ecclesiastica* (ed. E. W. Brooks, *CSCO Script. Syri.* 3 ser., III [1936]), III.24, and *Scriptores Originum Constantinopolitanorum*, II, ed. Preger (1907), 229.4, 220.14, 263.11, 267.8, etc.

36. See R. Janin, *La Géographie ecclésiastique de l'empire byzantin* I.3: *Les Églises et les monastères* (Paris, 1969), pp. 162f., 237f.

37. H. Pierce and R. Tyler, *L'Art byzantin* II (Paris, 1932), pls. 136, 199 b; D. Talbot Rice, *The Art of Byzantium* (London, 1959), no. 71; J. Beckwith, *The Art of Constantinople* (London, 1968), pl. 55.

38. See E. Kitzinger, 'The Cult of Images in the Period before Iconoclasm', *DOP*, VIII (1954), 83ff., esp. 121f.

39. *Life of St. Symeon the Younger*, ed. H. Delehaye (*Subsidia Hagiographica*, 14 [1923]), P. Van den Ven (ibid., 32.1 [1962]), chaps. 202–208; see also Symeon's letter to Justin, *MPG*, LXXXVI, col. 3215.

40. *MPG*, LXXXVI, col. 2349.

Justin paying particular honour and respect to certain Monophysite leaders, even during the time of persecution.<sup>41</sup> Again, Justin and Sophia felt strongly enough about the religious question to intervene personally in the examination of Monophysite convents.<sup>42</sup> And John, followed by Michael the Syrian, has high praise for Justin's aims in ecclesiastical policy at the beginning of his reign.<sup>43</sup> Basing himself on an outward aspect of Justin's activities, therefore, the chronicler Theophanes picked on a single trait. It is a trait missed by the political historians who focused on Justin's foreign policies, yet a trait of equal importance, which can be well documented elsewhere.

What of a serious assessment of Justin by contemporaries? Rubin constructed a theory according to which Agathias and Menander Protector were expressing official attitudes.<sup>44</sup> When Agathias, writing during the 570s, praises Justinian's war policies and criticizes the payment of subsidies to barbarians he is taken to be tacitly supporting Justin II in his abandonment of subsidies.<sup>45</sup> As the judgement of a serious historian, who intended to cover Justin's reign, though in the event he did not reach it,<sup>46</sup> this would be important. But it seems as though Agathias was writing the relevant section of his *History* in the reign of Tiberius, who did in fact return to subsidies, the disadvantages of Justin's policies having become glaringly obvious;<sup>47</sup> this puts a very different complexion on Agathias's supposed critique of Justin. Menander Protector, who continued Agathias's history in the reign of Maurice, gives the most serious treatment of Justin's foreign policy, and here it is indeed a favourable one.<sup>48</sup> Justin is presented as a strong

41. *HE*, II.3, cf. III.35.

42. *Ibid.*, I.10.

43. *Ibid.*, III.1.

44. *Das Zeitalter Justinians*, I, pp. 227f.

45. See Cameron, *Agathias*, p. 125.

46. See Agathias, *Hist.*, *pref.*, p. 10.19 (*CSHB*). Agathias did not conceive the idea of writing a history until after the accession of Justin II (*Pref.*, pp. 11.5f.), and in his main narrative he only reached the year 559; most probably he died about 580 with the *History* still unfinished (Cameron, *Agathias*, pp. 9f.).

47. See *Hist.* IV.29. Subsidies: A. H. M. Jones, *The Later Roman Empire*, I (Oxford, 1964), p. 307.

48. On Menander see O. Veh, *Beiträge zu Menander Protector*, *Zeitschrift zum Jahresbericht 1954/5 des Humanistischen Gymnasium Fürth*, Bayern 1955, 1–5.



emperor, dealing firmly with the arrogance of the Avars and adopting an uncompromising but not unrealistic stance towards Persia.<sup>49</sup> When he has occasion to refer to Justin's illness he does so in moderate terms, and without any moralizing explanations.<sup>50</sup> We know Menander's history largely from the *Excerpta de legationibus* of Constantine Porphyrogenitus, which are necessarily limited in scope; from what Menander says himself, however, it is probably fair to assume that its scale would have been similar to that of Agathias.<sup>51</sup> He begins where Agathias left off,<sup>52</sup> and it is likely therefore that he gave a relatively balanced assessment of Justin (though omitting much of the material covered by the ecclesiastical historians). Like Corippus, he seems to have approved of Justin's treatment of the Avar embassy of A.D. 565,<sup>53</sup> and to have found nothing serious to criticize in Justin's foreign policy. It is striking, then, to find much the same approach in the work of John of Ephesus, who is so hostile to Justin on other grounds, as we shall see. John criticizes Justin for incompetence and treachery in the details of the conduct of the Persian war and in his dealings with the Arabs;<sup>54</sup> yet he does not condemn Justin's policies as such. Like Corippus and Menander, he describes the Avar embassy of 565, and although his version is somewhat more highly coloured than that of the sober Menander, he seems to approve of Justin's handling of the delegation.<sup>55</sup> It would seem, then, that there was indeed an atmosphere of general approval for what Justin was attempting in foreign policy, even if we cannot use Agathias as evidence. A later generation saw things differently; for Theophylact Simocatta, writing in the reign of Heraclius, the renewed Persian war had brought only defeat and disaster, for which Justin, as its originator, was responsible.<sup>56</sup>

49. See frags. 14, 28, 33, 36 (*FHG*, IV.218ff.).

50. Fr. 37.

51. See fr. 1 (Menander's preface).

52. Ibid.: ἀρξασθαι μετὰ τὴν ἀποβίωσιν τοῦ Ἀγαθίου, καὶ τῆς ἱστορίας . . . ποιήσασθαι τὴν ἀρχήν. The text surely needs emendation: see Müller, ad loc.

53. Fr. 14; cf. Corippus, *Iust.* III.151ff.

54. *HE*, VI, especially 2–6, 10, 14, etc.

55. *HE*, VI.24.

56. *Hist.*, III.9.

The most striking and the most partial contemporary opinions of Justin II and Tiberius are to be found in the *Ecclesiastical Histories* of the orthodox Evagrius, lawyer and advocate of the Patriarch Gregory of Antioch when he came to Constantinople in 588 to defend himself against the scandalous charge of paganism,<sup>57</sup> and the Monophysite bishop John of Ephesus, leader of the Monophysite bishops imprisoned and abused in Constantinople by Justin's orders;<sup>58</sup> somehow or other these opinions are reflected in the *History of the Franks* by Gregory of Tours.<sup>59</sup> In all three authors the two emperors are sharply contrasted; Tiberius's character is shown against the background of that of Justin, and must necessarily be a foil to it. Clearly there is considerable distortion, and the overall picture is too simplistic; our task is to indicate the underlying complexities.

Evagrius and Gregory offer cardboard characters. Justin is dominated by greed and luxury,<sup>60</sup> while Tiberius is merciful and generous.<sup>61</sup> The characterizations of the two emperors are in no way integral to Gregory's narrative and are wholly separable from their context. They must derive from a good Byzantine source, though it is hardly possible to say what it was.<sup>62</sup> But Evagrius too offers mere stereotypes, making little effort to provide a rounded picture of the policies and aims of the two emperors. It is clear that he is not giving us genuine criticism, but superficial clichés instead. Unlike John of Ephesus, he does not oppose Justin for religious reasons. On what then is the

57. Evagrius, *HE*, VI.7. On Gregory's trial see also John of Ephesus, *HE*, III.28f.; V.17 (gets off by large-scale bribery).

58. John's sufferings: *HE*, II.4–7; credentials as an eye-witness: I.22, 30; II.6, 18.

59. See Averil Cameron, 'The Byzantine Sources of Gregory of Tours', *Journal of Theological Studies*, XXVI (1975), 421–26.

60. Evagrius, *HE*, V.1–2, 5 (Justin's motives for the deposition of Anastasius of Antioch), 11; Gregory, *Historia Francorum* IV.40 [hereafter *HF*].

61. Evagrius, *HE*, V.13; Gregory, *HF*, IV.40 (=Paulus Diaconus, *Historia Langobardorum* (*MGH*, Script. rer. Lang. [1878], III.11), V.19, 30 (=Paulus Diaconus, *HL*, III.11–12), VI.30 (Paulus Diaconus, *HL*, II.15).

62. G. F. Kurth, 'De l'autorité de Gregoire de Tours', *Études franques*, II (1919), 167, assumes that it derives from Byzantine ambassadors, but cannot name any suitable candidates. A written source seems to me possible (at least, n. 59 and n. 81 below).



criticism based? We can disentangle two separate threads—personal abuse and the *topos* of greed. The latter accusation has some foundation in fact, like Theophanes's statement of Justin's piety. Justin's inauguration speech reported by Corippus and a *Novel* of his first year demonstrate his concern for saving money;<sup>63</sup> he dismissed the Avars so as to avoid paying the large subsidies given to them by Justinian,<sup>64</sup> and John of Ephesus indicates the empress Sophia's concern for the treasury and her pride in the wealth which she and Justin had amassed.<sup>65</sup> The words which according to John she addressed to Tiberius reflect the credit side of a financial policy which could be seen in very different lights,<sup>66</sup> as we see from John's main narrative.<sup>67</sup> As the chronicle tradition focused on a single aspect of Justin's activity, while the political historians emphasized his foreign policy, so Evagrius, John and the source of Gregory picked on one particular feature—his attempt to restore the state finances. Evagrius's more personal abuse of Justin has a different explanation, rightly diagnosed by Tinnefeld.<sup>68</sup> It is associated with Justin's failure to recognize the merits of Evagrius's own patron, the Patriarch Gregory of Antioch; it was the loss of Dara to the Persians which drove Justin mad, and Evagrius blames the whole affair on Justin's refusal to listen to the advice of Gregory—because of his own arrogance and abandonment to pleasure and luxury.<sup>69</sup> Gregory survived scandal and suspicion in Antioch and Constantinople—by bribery, it was said—to become an envoy of Maurice in his negotiations with Chosroes II in 590.<sup>70</sup> Reading between the lines of John of Ephesus, it is clear that Tiberius had to some extent protected Gregory during the first throes of the witch-hunt of pagans which centred on Antioch in A.D. 579 and had its aftermath in a series of trials in Constantinople which went on through the 580s.<sup>71</sup> And so, as Gregory figures so large in the final pages of Evagrius, it is

63. Corippus, *Iust.* II.249f.; *Nov.* 148 (a. 566).

64. Stein [n. 2], 3f.

65. *HE*, III.11, 14, cf. V.20.

66. *Iust.* II.249f.

67. E.g. III.24; V.20; and for Sophia, III.10.

68. *Kaiserkritik* [n. 1], 45f.

69. *HE*, V.6–11.

70. Evagrius, *HE*, VI.17f.; Theophylact Simocatta, *Hist.*, IV.10f., esp. 14.

71. *HE*, III.28f.; Gregory's escape in 588—V.17.

Justin, who did not appreciate him, who is reviled, while Tiberius, apparently his protector, receives praise.

It is John of Ephesus who gives us by far the fullest account of Justin's reign, and John who suffered most in Justin's persecution of Monophysites.<sup>72</sup> Yet John's attitude to Justin, though hostile, is compassionate. He does not resort to Evagrius's stereotyped abuse. Justin and Sophia are real people who are seen in real situations—in disputation with Monophysite bishops, visiting religious communities to try to convert their inmates, influenced by powerful individuals and feeling the pangs of jealousy and indignation.<sup>73</sup> Justin's persecution of Monophysites is attributed largely to the twin influences of John Scholasticus and Anastasius;<sup>74</sup> his pathetic illness and Sophia's later discomfiture are ascribed to divine punishment for their folly,<sup>75</sup> certainly, but Justin's six 'good' years earn generous praise.<sup>76</sup> It is clear that John pitied Justin as well as condemned him; he had occasion to know him well<sup>77</sup> and was himself at the centre of the court circles that he describes so vividly. Unlike Evagrius, who was relatively unfamiliar with Constantinople, and would only have known of Justin by hearsay, John's credentials as historian of the reign were impeccable,<sup>78</sup> and his very full account, composed, as he tells us, under the greatest difficulty,<sup>79</sup> frequently gives us the material from which to counterbalance his own value judgements.

Such is the case with John's presentation of Tiberius II. Again we are presented elsewhere with a portrait which is to some extent a stereotype, and again this is most apparent in the

72. *HE*, II.5, 7f., 41, 50; III.15.

73. E.g. *HE*, I.5, 10, 33, 35, II.8 and *passim*.

74. See especially *HE*, II.25, 29.

75. III.2, 10.

76. III.1.

77. I.30; III.22.

78. I.22, 30; II.6, 18; III.22.

79. II.50: separate leaves of John's manuscript had to be concealed by his friends in different places for two or three years at a time; the result was that John himself had no copy of what he had written, and so frequently found himself describing the same thing twice or more. He says further that he was never able to revise and arrange the work at a late stage, and that the affecting apology is certainly borne out by the confused arrangement of our text.



reports of Evagrius and Gregory. For Evagrius Tiberius is tall and handsome—by any standards, let alone the standards of emperors; but in addition he is merciful and gentle (*ἡπιός τε καὶ φιλόανθρωπος*), and above all generous to all comers, not merely according to their deserts, but as befits a Roman emperor.<sup>80</sup> We find strikingly similar comments in Gregory—Tiberius was ‘a man strenuous and helpful, wise, charitable and the best defender of the poor’.<sup>81</sup> Clearly Tiberius is being set as a foil to the disastrous Justin. But compare Corippus on Tiberius, who was already a protégé of Justin and had been made Count of the Excubitors before Justin’s accession: he was as yet comparatively untried, but Corippus introduces him as a young man (*iuvēnis*) totally devoted to the welfare of the imperial court, wholly loyal and reliable.<sup>82</sup> The *Life* of the Patriarch Eutychius, restored in 577 to the Patriarchate of Constantinople, also mentions Tiberius with honour; Eutychius not only claimed to have foretold Tiberius’s accession (as he did those of Justin and Maurice), but even to have introduced him to Justin in the first place.<sup>83</sup> As a protector of Eutychius the Emperor Tiberius is favourably presented by the saint’s biographer—though it is very clear that the patriarch did all that he could to keep on good terms with each of the reigning emperors in turn. But more important and more serious than this are the occasional remarks of Theophylact Simocatta, and John of Ephesus’s allusions to Tiberius’s military preoccupations.<sup>84</sup> This was where his main activity and main achievement lay.<sup>85</sup> But as with Justin, contemporary criticism focused on his personal qualities. Again John of Ephesus gives the fullest information, and again his narrative indicates that Tiberius’s activities could be seen in different lights. John tells us that he knew Tiberius well from his youth at the court of Justin;<sup>86</sup> he testifies to his

80. *HE*, V.13.

81. *HF*, V.19, cf. IV.40, VI.30. The Latinized *aelimosinis* (VI.30) and *elimosinarium* (IV.40, VI.19) strongly suggest a written, and probably a Greek source.

82. *Iust.* I.212f., IV.253.

83. *MPG*, LXXXVI. col. 2349; cf. col. 2380.

84. Theophylact, *Hist.* I.3; III.16. John of Ephesus, *HE*, III.21, 25.

85. See Bury, *LRE* II [n. 2], 80.

86. III.22.

continuing frankness, gentleness and humility.<sup>87</sup> Sophia entertained hopes of marrying him, and he treated her with respect, as perhaps he had to, though he could be firm when necessary.<sup>88</sup> At his succession he was able to anticipate a dangerous plot,<sup>89</sup> and he seems to have refused to allow the persecution which followed the outbreak of paganism in 579 to be carried to the limits that some would have wished.<sup>90</sup> John often refers to his absorption in the continuing wars as a factor which limited his domestic activity.<sup>91</sup> When he agreed to allow Monophysite persecution it was only with reluctance,<sup>92</sup> or so John says to protect his hero, and John’s *History* also puts the best possible light on Tiberius’s persecution of Arians;<sup>93</sup> he was merely ‘giving way to the popular thirst’. Yet John’s own narrative makes it clear that in ordering the persecution Tiberius was actually trying to clear himself of seeming to look favourably on the request of his Gothic recruits and their families to establish an Arian church in Constantinople. There is little positive assessment of his short reign. By far the most prominent theme in John’s treatment of Tiberius is his generosity, and here the critique is at its crudest. John comments more than once on the extent of Tiberius’s largess, a theme which, as we have seen appears also in Evagrius.<sup>94</sup> Gregory has it too,<sup>95</sup> and a *Novel* of 575 shows that it was part of a deliberate policy.<sup>96</sup> But even to Tiberius’s supporters such generosity could seem like reckless extravagance,<sup>97</sup> and again John indicates the kind of arguments used by the other side. Even when Justin was alive and Tiberius was only Caesar his lack of concern for the state finances had caused serious concern, and Justin and Sophia had ‘scolded him sharply’, withdrawn the keys of the treasury and put him on a fixed allowance.<sup>98</sup> Sophia’s

87. *Ibid.*, a passage written in A.D. 581.

88. III.9–10, 24.

89. Gregory *HF*, V.30.

90. John of Ephesus, *HE*, III.31–33 (though III.30 seems critical of Tiberius).

91. III.21.

92. *Ibid.*

93. III.25.

94. John, *HE*, III.11, 14; V.20; cf. Evagrius, *HE*, V.13.

95. *HF*, V.19.

96. *Nov.* 163 (a. 575).

97. See especially *HE*, V.20; III.14.

98. III.11.



later remonstrances with him on the same subject are also reported by John in detail,<sup>99</sup> and were evidently well known, for Gregory has them too.<sup>100</sup> Sophia must have had her defenders, especially in her unsuccessful contest for status with Tiberius's obscure but legal wife Ino,<sup>101</sup> and this is again dimly visible even amid the hostility of John's narrative. In the same way while ostensibly criticizing Justin and supporting Tiberius, John lets us see that there was an alternative version sympathetic to the one and critical of the other.<sup>102</sup> It would be fascinating to know where Gregory found his character sketches of Justin and Tiberius, and in particular the circumstantial details which he alone gives about the plotting which nearly prevented Tiberius's assumption of complete power;<sup>103</sup> he could hardly have derived them from Evagrius or John of Ephesus, both of whom were still writing in the reign of Maurice.<sup>104</sup> As it is, these three historians together demonstrate (Evagrius and Gregory dimly and fitfully, John in great detail) the complexities of political criticism in Constantinople.

## II

Byzantine *Kaiserkritik* is not a simple concept. In Byzantium, as in every state at all periods, people held differing views about the policies and characters of their rulers. These natural differences are exacerbated in our sources by literary considerations. There are many questions about the period which we have been considering to which we shall never know the answers—the truth, for example, about the sensational conspiracy of Aetherius and Addaeus in 566, evidently too embarrassing to relate in detail<sup>105</sup>—and in part this is because of the nature of the sources. Not only are the literary sources widely different in their viewpoints: we must also be careful which *kind* of source

99. III.14.

100. HF, V.19.

101. John, HE, III.7f.

102. At one point John finds himself defending Tiberius against those who thought him too passive—III.22, and cf. III.30.

103. HF, V.30.

104. Evagrius, HE, VI.24 (A.D. 594); John, HE, V.14 (A.D. 589).

105. Corippus, *Iust.* 1.60–1; Evagrius, HE, V.3; Eustrat., V. *Eutych.*, MPG, LXXXVI, col. 2361.

we use as the basis of our analysis. History writing was still divided basically between those who concentrated on wars and diplomacy and those who wrote the history of the Church. Evagrius, it is true, drew heavily on Procopius's *Wars*, and John of Ephesus included in his *Ecclesiastical History* an account of the military affairs of his period. But a historian who would unite external and internal matters into a unified whole into which difficult considerations of classicism would not obtrude themselves was still lacking. Nobody yet (though John of Ephesus came nearest to it) could cope remotely adequately with the realities of the Byzantine state in the later sixth century. Nobody saw its problems as a whole and consequently nobody attempted a serious assessment of the contribution of an individual emperor. Value judgements in different authors vary in scope according to the literary type of the work in which they are contained, and within these limitations even the most valuable authors have recourse to clichés and stereotypes. To concentrate on the traditionalist historians who still followed the classical model of focusing on wars and diplomacy is to be misled by what seems to us to be the dominant influence of Procopius. Modern scholars approaching the study of the sixth century invariably do so through Procopius, above all through the *Secret History*, in such a way that it seems to be the pattern and model of all Byzantine *Kaiserkritik*. In fact, however, it is very doubtful whether it was generally known until much later.<sup>106</sup> This is not the place to go into further detail about the *Secret History*, which despite recent work remains in sore need of a fresh approach.<sup>107</sup> But it can be said at this point both that the categories and approach of the *Secret History* are in many ways idiosyncratic and untypical and that the reigns immediately following that of Justinian produced a lively political debate which owed little to the attitudes of an earlier generation. Justinian's long and spectacular reign, like that of Queen Victoria, must have seemed to mark the end of an era, but it did not, I suspect, mesmerize contemporaries as completely as we have allowed ourselves to think.

106. B. Rubin, *Prokopios von Kaisarria* (Stuttgart, 1951), p. 253. Evagrius certainly used the *Wars* extensively, but it is not proven that he knew the *Secret History* (cf. Rubin, art. cit. [n. 1], 156).

107. Which I hope to give in a forthcoming book.



All the same, in classicizing and non-classicizing sources alike, certain general and recurring patterns of thought do emerge. Not even the best contemporary critics were able to throw off the habit of interpreting politics in terms of the personal behaviour of the emperor. Neither an ambitious writer and *littérateur* such as Procopius, nor an involved ecclesiastic like John of Ephesus could reach beyond the personal. And the personal was itself presented in terms of stereotyped expectations. How deeply this mentality was ingrained can be seen from the early sixth-century *Oracle of Baalbek*, which in its 'prophecy' promises that the Emperor Zeno's rule 'will be pleasing to the entire people; he will love the Poor and will humble the Powerful and Rich'.<sup>108</sup> He will be followed by Anastasius, who is 'noble, terrifying, high-souled and free (*μεγαλόψυχος καὶ ἐλεύθερος*) and hates all the beggars'.<sup>109</sup> What matters is the character of the emperor ('good' or 'bad') and his character manifests itself at home above all in his financial policies (so we have Justin II, the 'miser' and Tiberius II, the 'generous' or the 'prodigal'). I would go further and suggest that when an emperor came to the throne he was in turn himself impelled by the need to act out the rôle demanded of him by the expectations of his subjects; the Byzantine Emperor was the living image of God, but he also had a secular rôle to play, and this rôle was conceived as consisting above all of two elements—the financial on the domestic front and the military in external affairs. Contemporary criticism of Justin II and Tiberius exactly illustrates these ideological limitations to the emperor's rôle. And in real terms, contemporary expectations brought a response from the emperors themselves, in the form of repayment of debts, remission of taxes, or (abroad) refusal or payment of subsidies, for which in turn the emperors were criticized and on the basis of which they were evaluated. When Justin II repaid Justinian's debts and released prisoners from jail he was acting out the rôle of a Byzantine Emperor just as surely as when he assumed the insignia of power. And as we can see from Menander Protector, the element of rôle-playing was paradoxically at its most acute

<sup>108</sup>. *The Oracle of Baalbek*, ed. P. J. Alexander (Washington, 1967), pp. 159–61, trans., p. 27.

<sup>109</sup>. *Ibid.*, pp. 167–8.

in the area where realism was most needed—that of foreign relations.

Thesis and antithesis—Byzantine *Kaiserkritik* proceeded along a zigzag course as the characters of individual emperors oscillated between 'good' and 'bad'. Occasionally we encounter a personal judgement of a less limited kind, but there were many rocks on which Byzantine political criticism was likely to founder, and of these that of the Procopian tradition was perhaps the least important.

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THE EARLY RELIGIOUS POLICIES  
OF JUSTIN II

ON 14 November AD 565, Justinian died and his nephew Justin was raised to the throne in a well managed senatorial coup.<sup>1</sup> He was already of middle age and had spent the latter part of his life building up useful connections at court which served him well when the critical moment came: his rival, cousin and homonym was far more glamorous, being a military man, but he was not on the spot and Justin was easily able to have him removed.<sup>2</sup> We are told that the murder was engineered by Justin's empress, Sophia, the niece of Theodora, a lady who emerges as a figure as powerful and in many ways more interesting than her aunt.<sup>3</sup> From the first the reign was a partnership; Sophia is shown in a novel way together with her husband on Justin's coins, and is named with him in the headings to decrees preserved on papyri.<sup>4</sup> So Justin at least acquiesced in her prominence, even if he did not like it, and it was natural for poets and historians to give as much attention to the empress as to the emperor. When the loss of the Mesopotamian border fortress of Dara to the Persians in 573 drove Justin out of his wits Sophia very naturally took control, even though nominally the government had to be put into the hands of a man (Tiberius, appointed caesar in AD 574 and augustus in 578); yet her influence had been strong from the beginning, and we shall see that if it is right to see her driving force behind the harsh persecutions of monophysites in the 570s, we must also seek her initiative in the religious policy of the late 560s.

Very little modern work has been done on this reign.<sup>5</sup> It is passed

<sup>1</sup> Evagrius, *HE* ed J. Bidez and L. Parmentier (London 1898) bk V cap 1; Victor of Tununna, *Chronicle*, ed Th. Mommsen, *Chronica Minora II*, MGH AA 11 (1894) a. 567 (sic); Corippus, *In laudem Iustini*, ed Patsch, MGH AA, 11 (1892), bk I line 1 seq.

<sup>2</sup> Joh[n of] Biclar[o], *Chronicle*, ed Th. Mommsen, *Chronica Minora II*, MGH AA, 11 (1894) a. 568 (?); Evagrius, *HE* bk V caps 1-2; Agathias, *Hist[ory]*, CSHByz 1 (1828) IV. 22.

<sup>3</sup> Joh Biclar, a. 568 (?). See my article, "The empress Sophia," B 45 (1981) 13-33.

<sup>4</sup> See [Flavius Cresconius Corippus, *In laudem Iustini minoris*, ed with commentary and translation by Averil] Cameron (London 1976) note on *Sanctus Anastasius* 23.

<sup>5</sup> The only two detailed studies are [K.] Groh, [*Geschichte des oströmischen Kaisers Justin II nebst den Quellen*], Diss. Halle (Leipzig 1889) and [E.] Stein, [*Studien zur Geschichte des*



over briefly in the general histories, and Justin is usually portrayed unsparingly and unsympathetically as a fool who got his deserts by going mad; on this reading his two main initiatives were equally disastrous—the renewal of the war with Persia ('megalomaniac and irresponsible')<sup>6</sup> led to long years of struggle and defeat, while the reopening of persecution against the monophysites contributed to the eventual development of monophysite separatism. I am not suggesting that there is very much that can be said in Justin's favour. But at least we might pay him the compliment of studying the sources for his reign fully and critically. They may not be good enough to allow a full 'internal history' of the period,<sup>7</sup> but there is very varied material available, from which a rather more subtle narrative can be reconstructed.

Justin's religious policy between 565 and 572 is a case in point. If we read Frend's account of these years<sup>8</sup> we view Justin as mainly concerned with the east. 'The empire was becoming "Greek" rather than "Roman", and the concentration of Monophysitism in Egypt and astride the vital frontier area with Persia urged, as always, the need for compromise.'<sup>9</sup> Further, 'the new emperor and his consort were well-disposed towards Monophysite theology';<sup>10</sup> accordingly Justin made immediate efforts towards conciliation, and when the first attempt ended in failure he returned to the task with a second *Henotikon*.<sup>11</sup> Only when this too failed did he become 'exasperated' and turn to persecution. I do not question the general outlines of this portrayal of Justin's relations with the monophysites in his early years. As we shall see, he does seem to have tried conciliation before force; but as an overall picture of Justin's religious policies this version has serious omissions, simply because it is based only on one section of the sources, the eastern rather than the western, and then mainly on the twelfth-century monophysite chronicle of Michael the Syrian. A statement affirming Sophia's monophysitism based solely on Michael's biased

byzantinischen Reiches, vornehmlich unter den Kaisern Justinus II und Tiberius Constantinus] (Stuttgart 1919).

<sup>6</sup> A. H. M. Jones, *The Later Roman Empire 284–602* (Oxford 1964) I, p. 306.

<sup>7</sup> Stein p. 1.

<sup>8</sup> [W. H. C.] Frend [The Rise of the Monophysite Movement] (Cambridge 1972) pp. 317 seq.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.* p. 320.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.* p. 319.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 321–2. See Evagrius *HE* bk V cap 4; Nicephorus Callistus, *HE* bk XVII cap 35 (PG 146) col. 308; John of Ephesus, *HE*, trans. R. Payne Smith (Oxford 1860) bk I caps 19 seq.; Michael the Syrian, [Chronicle], ed. J.-B. Chabot, I–III (Paris 1899–1905) bk X cap 4.

### The early religious policies of Justin II

account must be regarded as dubious, when Michael's main source, the contemporary and equally monophysite John of Ephesus, explicitly says that she gave it up so as not to impede Justin's chances of getting the throne.<sup>12</sup> We cannot then say without qualification that Justin's attitude in 565 was wholly favourable to monophysitism, even if it is true (although again we owe the information to Michael alone) that one of his first actions was to receive the exiled monophysite patriarch of Alexandria, Theodosius, and, when he died in June 566, to allow a funeral oration which condemned Chalcedon.<sup>13</sup> When we turn back to the first edition of J. B. Bury's *History of the Later Roman Empire* (still a very useful account of this period), we find a very different emphasis.<sup>14</sup> Justin's accession is said to mark a reaction in the direction of orthodoxy; he issued an edict enforcing orthodoxy on all his subjects and expressly excluding monophysites from the designation 'orthodox'.<sup>15</sup> Now it is true that as it happens (if we believe Michael the Syrian, with Frend) Bury was wrong on both the interpretation and the dating of Justin's edict,<sup>16</sup> but his general impression of the opening of Justin's reign was not hopelessly out, as we shall see if we look at another group of sources altogether. I shall argue that (as one would expect) the western sources and the eastern sources for Justin emphasise quite opposite tendencies in his policies—policies which (again as one would expect) were themselves in any case ambiguous. Consequently any reconstruction of these policies based only on one sector of the sources must be at best misleading; the truth must be more complex than has hitherto been allowed.

There is then an apparent conflict in the sources, with attendant problems of dating. Even so, some sort of coherent narrative can be pieced together to show that Justin and Sophia by no means confined their religious activities to the east. In one quarter of the west at least they appeared in a totally orthodox guise.

Our first reference for Justin's religious activity comes from the Spanish chronicler John of Biclar, who, though then still a boy, had actually been living in Constantinople at the time of these events.<sup>17</sup> In the first year of Justin's reign, he says, *ea quae contra synodum*

<sup>12</sup> Michael the Syrian, bk X cap 7; John of Ephesus *HE* bk II cap 10.

<sup>13</sup> Michael the Syrian, bk X cap 1.

<sup>14</sup> [J. B.] Bury, [History of the Later Roman Empire from Arcadius to Irene] (London 1889) 2, p. 72.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.* For the edict see n. 11 above and pp. 12–13 below.

<sup>16</sup> Below p. 62.

<sup>17</sup> Joh. Biclar a. 567 (?).



*Chalcedonensem fuerant commentata destruxit* ('he destroyed what had been written in opposition to the council of Chalcedon'). Whatever this means, it indicates a very early action against monophysites. John puts this notice before the murder of Justin and the conspiracy of Aetherius and Addaeus, both of which took place in 566.<sup>18</sup> Then he says that Justin ordered the creed of Constantinople to be recited in all catholic churches before the Lord's Prayer. This could only be taken, to use Bury's misapplied phrase, as an orthodox manifesto. If at the same time Justin was honouring the monophysite patriarch Theodosius and restoring monophysite bishops from exile,<sup>19</sup> he was walking a tightrope, trying to present himself simultaneously as fully Chalcedonian. He did not restore Eutychius, the exiled patriarch of Constantinople, at this time, but for reasons of prudence retained the violently anti-monophysite John Scholasticus who had crowned him; it is to John's influence that John of Ephesus attributes much of the later persecutions.<sup>20</sup> At the same time again his *quaestor* was already that Anastasius who was to be the other great persecutor, and was accused of being a Samaritan.<sup>21</sup> Justin's motive in ordering the inclusion of the creed was surely indeed what Bury suspected his aim must be—the desire to reestablish the concern of the imperial government for orthodoxy after Justinian's final lapse into heresy. The patriarch Eutychius had gone into exile rather than accept Justinian's heretical edict; John Scholasticus had been more accommodating on that point, but where monophysitism was concerned he was an unrelenting Chalcedonian.

The decree recorded by John of Biclar explains the point of allusions made by two contemporary Latin poets, both writing in the late 560s and both depicting Justin as completely orthodox. Only one was really a westerner—Venantius Fortunatus, writing on behalf of Radegund at Poitiers—and he will need fuller discussion, but the other must be dealt with first. This is Corippus, an African by birth who had achieved literary success with a Latin epic nearly twenty years before, had come to Constantinople and now wrote a panegyric on the accession of

<sup>18</sup> The execution of Aetherius and Addaeus was in October: Eustratius, *Vita Eutychii*, PG 86, col. 2361; Evagrius HE bk V cap 3; Joh Biclar a. 568 (?); Theophanes, [Chronographia], ed de Boor (Leipzig 1883–5) 1 p. 242. See Cameron, note on Corippus *In laudem Iustini* bk I lines 60–1.

<sup>19</sup> Michael the Syrian bk X cap 1; Joh Biclar a. 567 (?); Venantius Fortunatus, *Appendix Carminum* 2, lines 39–46, ed F. Leo, MGH AA, IV, 1 (1881).

<sup>20</sup> See Cameron, note on Corippus, *In laudem Iustini*, bk II line 160. John Scholasticus is John of Ephesus's chief villain: see especially HE bk II cap 17.

<sup>21</sup> John of Ephesus HE bk II cap 29; on Samaritans see Justin's *Novel* 144 (a. 572).

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Justin which he dedicated to the *quaestor* Anastasius.<sup>22</sup> The poem was written before 568; books I–III perhaps belong to 566 and book IV to 567.<sup>23</sup> Into book IV Corippus inserts a very unwieldy digression in praise of the church of St Sophia,<sup>24</sup> of which part<sup>25</sup> is virtually a paraphrase of the creed, said to be symbolised by the physical appearance of the church.<sup>26</sup> The only point in interposing this quite untypical and 'unclassical' section in the middle of a description of Justin's consular inauguration on 1 January 566 is surely to compliment the emperor's recent decree ordering the inclusion of the creed in the liturgy. This is not a religious poem as such, except insofar as the imperial ideology had a religious content; but stress is laid throughout on Justin's position as God-given and his own role as the imitator of God, and in this work dedicated to the hyper-orthodox Anastasius there is nothing that is not itself completely orthodox. Book IV was added shortly after the first three books, and seems to have a defensive air about it—the speech attributed to the dying Justinian is an obvious defence of Justin's execution of Aetherius and Addaeus in 566<sup>27</sup>—so that it would be quite in keeping for Corippus to attempt to support Justin's religious policies by lending them the prestige of a link with St Sophia; in the same passage he drags in a reference to Justin's new palace called the *Sophianae*<sup>28</sup> and attempts a forced connection between the name of the church and the name of the new empress.<sup>29</sup> This creed passage is then no mere rhetorical flourish, but a tendentious allusion to a decree which had surely given rise to opposition in eastern quarters.

The same decree lies behind the allusions to Justin's restoration of orthodoxy in the poem which Venantius Fortunatus wrote to thank Justin and Sophia for their gift to the convent at Poitiers of a fragment

<sup>22</sup> *In laudem Iustini minoris*. See note 4 above.

<sup>23</sup> Cameron, intro, (i). See also [Averil] Cameron 'Notes [on the Sophiae, the Sophianae and the Harbour of Sophia]', B 37 (1967) pp. 15 seq.

<sup>24</sup> Bk IV lines 264–325.

<sup>25</sup> Bk IV lines 290–311.

<sup>26</sup> Bk IV lines 292–4: 'internis oculis illic pia cernitur esse indivisa manens patris genitque potestas spiritus et sanctus . . .'. *Internis oculis* (line 292) proves that lines 293–311 refer to the symbolism of the church and not to a real mosaic decoration—so A. Heisenberg, 'Die alten Mosaiken der Apostelkirche und der Hagia Sophia', *Εἰσαγωγή. Hommage international à l'université nationale de Grèce* (Athens 1912) pp. 121 seq., 143 seq.

<sup>27</sup> Bk IV lines 348 seq.; see Cameron, notes *ad loc.*

<sup>28</sup> Bk IV lines 285–90, esp. 287: *Sophianarum plenitudo tecta novarum*. For the name see Cameron, 'Notes'.

<sup>29</sup> Bk IV lines 264–73. The name of the church foretold the accession of Justin and Sophia—line 273, 'sceptra fuerant ea signa futuri'.



of the true cross.<sup>30</sup> The circumstances of Venantius's life are well known from his own poems and especially his metrical *Life of Saint Martin*; <sup>31</sup> born about 530, he came from Treviso, near Venice, studied in Ravenna, undertook a pilgrimage to the shrine of St Martin at Tours after a cure for an eye disease, reached the court of Sigibert of Austrasia in 565, where he wrote many poems including an epithalamium for Sigibert's marriage in 566, went on to Tours and thence reached Poitiers in 567, where he was so captivated by the romantic figures of Radegund, queen turned nun and ascetic, and Agnes, her young abbess, that he stayed there for the rest of his life, being ordained presbyter and indeed ending as bishop of Poitiers. During those years at Poitiers he had a considerable poetic output, largely occasional poetry, but including some more serious pieces, among them two of the great hymns of the catholic church, *Vexilla regis prodeunt* and *Pange lingua*, both written for the very occasion when Justin sent the relic of the holy cross. We are equally well informed about the life of Radegund herself, from the prose *Life* which Venantius wrote soon after her death in 587, from Gregory of Tours, a close friend of both, and from the secondary *Life* written by a nun of the convent in 609.<sup>32</sup> Through the foundation of her convent at Poitiers, when she had eventually prevailed upon her husband Lothar I to allow it, and her subsequent life there in a nominally subservient position (but drawing attention to herself by frequent ascetic seclusions) she became an important figure in the development of western monasticism, while the poems of Venantius to herself and Agnes set an early pattern for courtly literature.<sup>33</sup> She never forgot that she was a queen, and it was this that enabled her to exploit the accession of a new emperor in Byzantium in 565 by sending a messenger to ask for relics. Her first step was to turn to Sigibert for aid; he sent

<sup>30</sup> *Appendix carminum*. 2 *Ad Iustinum et Sophiam Augustos*.

<sup>31</sup> Compare also Paulus Diaconus, *H[istoria] L[angobardorum]*, ed Bethmann and Waitz, *MGH SRL* (1878) bk II cap 13. See in particular [W.] Meyer, ['Der Gelegenheitsdichter Venantius Fortunatus'], *AAWG PhK*, NF, band IV. 5 (1901); [R.] Koebner, [*Venantius Fortunatus. Seine Persönlichkeit und seine Stellung in der geistigen Kultur des Merowinger-Reiches*] (Leipzig/Berlin 1915).

<sup>32</sup> The *Lives* by Fortunatus and Baudonivia are edited by B. Krusch, *MGH, SRM*, 2 (1888). For Radegund's life see [R.] Aigran, [*Sainte Radegonde*] (Paris 1918, 2 ed Poitiers 1952). F. Graus, *Volk, Herrsche und Heiliger im Reich der Merowinger* (Prague 1965) pp 407 seq and [E.] Prinz, [*Frühes Mönchtum in Frankenreich*] (Munich/Vienna 1965) pp 157 seq, give some idea of the bibliography.

<sup>33</sup> [R.] Bezzola, [*Les origines et la formation de la littérature courtoise en Occident (500-1200)*], *BEHE* 286, 1 (1944) pp 55 seq.

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letters in her support which her envoys took to Constantinople.<sup>34</sup> But she was also concerned with the political relations between Sigibert and Byzantium;<sup>35</sup> we know that some time later Sigibert himself sent two ambassadors to Justin,<sup>36</sup> and Radegund saw further than the convent walls at Poitiers. She also appealed to her cousin Amalafid in Constantinople.<sup>37</sup> He had been there since the capture of Ravenna in 540 with his mother and family and had served as a general in the Byzantine army.<sup>38</sup> With this support Radegund's request for relics was successful. Her envoys returned with a fragment of the true cross set in a reliquary, together with other relics of the apostles and martyrs and a beautiful gospel book.<sup>39</sup> The relic of the cross is still preserved in the convent of the Holy Cross at Poitiers (when the relic arrived the convent took its name from it); it is contained in a partially preserved reliquary of enamel work which some scholars believe is the original Byzantine reliquary sent by Justin and Sophia.<sup>40</sup> But the reception of the relic was not without incident; in this mysterious and hothouse community of aristocrats, to become the scene of shameful scandals after the death of Radegund,<sup>41</sup> there was already dissension. Maroveus, the then bishop of Poitiers, refused to receive the relics into the convent, and, as Gregory puts it, 'mounted his horse and went off to a country estate';<sup>42</sup> Sigibert's aid had to be called for again, and the ceremony was performed by Euphronius, bishop of Tours. This then was the occasion of Venantius's great hymns, and the background to the poem of thanks which he wrote in Radegund's name to be sent to Justin and Sophia in Constantinople.<sup>43</sup>

<sup>34</sup> Gregory [of Tours], *H[istoria] F[rancorum]*, ed B. Krusch and W. Levison, *MGH SRM* I. 1 (2 ed 1951) bk IX cap 40; *Vita Radegundis* (see note 32) bk II cap 16.

<sup>35</sup> Compare *Vita Radegundis*, bk II cap 16 'pro totius patriae salute et eius regni stabilitate'.

<sup>36</sup> Gregory, *HF* bk IV cap 40. For the date (? 571) see Stein, p 34 n 18; [W.] Goffart, ['Byzantine Policy in the West under Tiberius II and Maurice'], *Traditio* 13 (1957) p 77 seq.

<sup>37</sup> Venantius, *App[endix] carm[inum]* 1, *De excidio Thoringae*.

<sup>38</sup> Bezzola, pp 55 seq. Compare Procopius, [*De] B[ello] G[othico]*, ed Haury-Wirth (Leipzig 1963) bk IV cap 25. Venantius, *App carm* 1, lines 97 seq.

<sup>39</sup> Gregory, *HF* bk IX cap 40; *Vita Radegundis* bk II cap 16. For the reliquary see Sir M. Conway, 'St. Radegund's Reliquary at Poitiers', *The Antiquaries' Journal* 3 (London 1923) pp 1-12. [E.] Mâle, [*Le Fin du paganisme en Gaule et les plus anciennes basiliques chrétiennes*] (Paris 1950) pp 294-5.

<sup>40</sup> Mâle, p 295.

<sup>41</sup> Gregory, *HF* bk IX caps 40-3.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid* bk IX cap 40.

<sup>43</sup> *App carm* 2. For the hymns see J. Szöverffy, 'Venantius Fortunatus and the earliest hymns to the Holy Cross', *Classical Folia* 20 (New York 1966) pp 107-22.



The poems written at this time and collected at the beginning of Venantius's second book are sufficient testimony to the veneration of the holy cross which immediately centred on the relic at Poitiers;<sup>44</sup> in particular the two hymns are still in use today. But it is the poem to Justin and Sophia that is of direct interest to our present theme. Its importance in relation to Justin's religious policies is obvious, yet it has hardly been used so far. The poem divides into two sections, addressed to Justin and Sophia respectively<sup>45</sup> and throughout the emperor and empress are treated as a pair, each peerless—*ecce pari voto, Augusti, certatis utrinque; / ipsa tuum sexum subrigis, ille suum* (lines 56–66). Justin is a Constantine, Sophia a Helena (line 67). Above all, the request of Radegund was granted on Sophia's initiative (lines 55 following), and Sophia is given equal space with Justin. But the opening of the poem is the most interesting: it consists of an address to the Trinity, with ten lines of orthodox theological definition, very closely reminiscent of Corippus's creed section. There are even certain verbal similarities, though perhaps derived from the close similarity of subject matter rather than from direct acquaintance.<sup>46</sup> After this trinitarian opening Venantius explicitly praises Justin for his conformity to catholic doctrine: 'how rightly Rome and the Roman world is ruled by him who follows the doctrine voiced by the chair of Peter!' (lines 15–16). Then again, 'the faith of the church, once shaken, is strengthened and shines out anew, and venerable law returns to its former position. Give thanks to God, that the new emperor (*nova purpura*) holds to what the council of Chalcedon decided' (lines 23–6). All the west is said to rejoice at the fact that Christ and the emperor are now united (lines 27 following). And witness to that are the exiled bishops restored to their sees on Justin's accession (lines 39 following, especially line 40, *tunc rediere sibi, cum diadema tibi*). No less than Corippus, Venantius is celebrating a specific event, and it seems obvious that the demonstration of catholic faith given by Justin consisted in his decree about the creed. Like Corippus, Venantius commemorated the decree in his poem with a trinitarian section which would otherwise seem oddly inappropriate. Michael the Syrian tells us that on his accession Justin was anxious to secure church unity,<sup>47</sup> and it seems that he convinced both sides at first. The monophysites saw

<sup>44</sup> *Carm* II 1–6. Bks I–VIII were published by Venantius in 576 or soon after—Meyer p. 24. For the holy cross see Prinz pp. 157 seq.; John of Ephesus *HE* bk II cap. 29.

<sup>45</sup> Lines 1–50, 51–100.

<sup>46</sup> *App. carm.* 2. 1–8; Corippus. *In laudem Iustini* bk IV lines 293–7.

<sup>47</sup> Michael the Syrian bk X cap. 1.

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Theodosius honoured and negotiations opened with their bishops, while Chalcedonians and westerners looked to Justin for support of their own point of view. By their action in sending the relic to Poitiers Justin and Sophia created a centre of catholic devotion for centuries to come.

The dates of Venantius's poem and of the sending of the relic can be fixed to within a year or so, if not absolutely precisely. *Nova purpura* (line 25) suggests a time near Justin's accession. But Venantius did not reach Poitiers until 567,<sup>48</sup> nor did Charibert die and Sigibert's authority over Poitiers begin before the end of that year. Radegund sent first to Sigibert, and then her envoys would have taken some considerable time over their journey (Sigibert's ambassadors were away for a year).<sup>49</sup> It seems that the expedition to Constantinople left during 568, was rewarded without delay by the emperor and empress, and that Venantius's poem of thanks belongs to the following year, 569, after the formal reception ceremony had taken place;<sup>50</sup> during this interval Maroveus of Poitiers had become estranged from the queen.<sup>51</sup> The poem certainly antedates 573, when Euphronius of Tours died and Gregory became bishop,<sup>52</sup> and there is every reason to suppose that the reception ceremony and the composition of Venantius's poems took place as soon as possible after the arrival of the relics. In 568, therefore, it was in Justin's interest to appear as cooperative as possible to western religious sensibilities. Perhaps it was about now that Justin and Sophia sent their famous cross to Rome, now in the Vatican treasury.<sup>53</sup> Like the Poitiers relic, this was a joint gift; it bears the portraits of Justin and Sophia on the arms of the cross, with the Lamb of God in between and an inscription on the back.

Venantius represents the motives of Justin and Sophia as wholly religious, but there must have been a strongly political slant to the gift. The Franks after all were catholic, unlike most of the Germanic world; they stood out from the rest of the barbarian peoples as obvious potential allies for Byzantium, and this is how the Byzantines had

<sup>48</sup> Meyer pp. 9 seq.; Koebner pp. 39 seq.

<sup>49</sup> Gregory *HF* bk IV cap. 40.

<sup>50</sup> Aignan, first edition p. 102. Radegund sent Reovalis back to Constantinople with thanks for Justin—presumably Venantius' poem (*Vita Radegundis* bk II cap. 17).

<sup>51</sup> Gregory *HF* bk IX cap. 40.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid* bk X cap. 31.

<sup>53</sup> H. Pierce and R. Tyler, *L'Art byzantin* (Paris 1927) plates 136, 137; D. T. Rice, *The Art of Byzantium* (London 1959) no. 71; J. Beckwith, *The Art of Constantinople* (London 1968) plate 55. For the importance of his imperial gift see *L'Iconoclisme byzantin* (Paris 1957) pp. 19, 25.



optimistically viewed them in the Italian wars of Justinian.<sup>54</sup> Theudebert's invasion of Italy in 539 had given the lie to an idealistic idea of the Franks (hence Procopius's hostility),<sup>55</sup> yet such a view persisted in Byzantium. The historian, Agathias, writing in the early 570s, and of an expedition when the Byzantines and the Franks were on opposite sides, included a striking eulogy of them.<sup>56</sup> It is partly, and indeed, explicitly, based on religious considerations, but I have argued elsewhere that political motives enter also.<sup>57</sup> Agathias could have derived his information from those ambassadors of Sigibert already mentioned, from Radegund's own envoys, from Reovalis, who carried Venantius's poem to Constantinople, or indeed from Amalafrid and his family. The late 570s were the years when Byzantine hopes for the west centred on trying to persuade the Franks to drive out the Arian Lombards from Italy (especially after 575, when the Byzantines made an ill-fated attempt to do the job themselves).<sup>58</sup> But it is far too cavalier to say, as does the standard work on the subject, that Justin II was not interested in the west.<sup>59</sup> We have seen, through Venantius, that he was. It was a simple gesture to send the relic in response to Radegund's request; yet it made a deep impression and had the advantage of simultaneously complimenting Radegund's patron, Sigibert. Agathias's eulogy of the Franks, Sigibert's embassy, Radegund's request and her attempt to enlist the support of Amalafrid (whom she at least thought influential at the Byzantine court)—all these show that Byzantine interest in the Franks never waned, even though in the shadowy years of the 560s and 570s little positive could be done. The Poitiers relic demonstrated that both sides were alive to the possibilities.

This is an opportunity to put forward another sign of the fruits of Radegund's mission to Constantinople. It so happens that Venantius is one of the few writers to show possible knowledge of the poems of

<sup>54</sup> Procopius *BG* bk I cap 5.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid* bk IV cap 34.18, compare 24.11. See [Averil] Cameron, 'Agathias [on the Early Merovingians]', *Annali della Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa*, ser. 2, 37 (1968) pp 122, 136 seq.

<sup>56</sup> Agathias *Hist* I. 2-7.

<sup>57</sup> Cameron 'Agathias', pp 136 seq. On the orthodoxy of the Franks compare Agathias, *Hist* I.2, p 17.7 f. Bonn.

<sup>58</sup> Joh Biclár, 2. 576; Agnellus, *liber pontificalis*, ed Holder-Egger, *MGHS RL* (1878) p 51. Paulus Diaconus, *HL* bk II cap 32; see Goffart p 80. The Byzantine army, under Justin's son-in-law Baduarius, was totally defeated.

<sup>59</sup> P. Goubert, *Byzance avant l'Islam II.1: Byzance et les Francs* (Paris 1956) p 9. See however Goffart pp 74 seq, Stein pp 16-7.

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Corippus.<sup>60</sup> The two poems of Corippus are each preserved in only one manuscript, in each case from Spain, and it seems that the panegyric at least had reached Spain at an early date.<sup>61</sup> It is tempting to believe that Venantius actually acquired a copy of Corippus directly from Radegund's envoy, on this very occasion. We have seen that Corippus cannot have completed the panegyric on Justin later than 567, while Radegund's envoys were in Constantinople in the very next year and Reovalis in 569. So Venantius's trinitarian section in his poem to Justin and Sophia (composed in 569) could have been written with Corippus's creed paraphrase immediately before him. We have to suppose in any case that Corippus's poems reached Venantius in Poitiers very soon after their completion, and it seems far more likely that they were transmitted by the envoys from Poitiers when the panegyric was still topical and fresh.<sup>62</sup> So we have an intriguing connection between two of our main sources so far, and a further sign of interest in Byzantium evinced from Poitiers. Corippus's panegyric is an interesting production for its milieu: a complex Latin poem written in the surroundings of the Greek culture of Constantinople and wholly concerned with Byzantine imperial ideology and ceremonial. But there is a further bonus. Among the poems labelled *spuria* in Leo's edition of Venantius is one *In laudem Mariae*, in praise of the Virgin Mary. It so happens that Corippus's poem includes a prayer to the Virgin spoken by the empress Sophia.<sup>63</sup> Numerous verbal parallels have been adduced between the prayer and Venantius's poem,<sup>64</sup> and while some certainly belong to the genre in general, there could well be a connection between the two.<sup>65</sup> If this were so, it would be very tempting to believe what seems very likely on other grounds—namely that Venantius is indeed the writer of the *In laudem Mariae*.<sup>66</sup> From these tenuous threads a fuller picture gradually emerges, showing on the one hand the interest of a western community and a western poet in

<sup>60</sup> M. Manitius, 'Zu spätlateinischen Dichtern', *ZOG* (1886) pp 250 seq.

<sup>61</sup> For the *Iust*, see Cameron intro, (x).

<sup>62</sup> It would have lost its relevance very quickly; compare the loss of the many panegyrics honouring Justinian.

<sup>63</sup> *Iust* bk II lines 52-69. For Sophia and the Virgin see also Michael the Syrian bk X cap 7.

<sup>64</sup> See Cameron comm. *ad loc*.

<sup>65</sup> I hope to investigate this elsewhere, as part of a general study of Mariological developments in the later sixth century.

<sup>66</sup> So Koebner pp 143 seq; D. Tardi, *Fortunat* (Paris 1927) pp 163 seq; S. Blomgren, *Studia Fortunatiana* 2, *De carmine in laudem Sanctae Mariae compos. Venantii Fortunati recte attribuendo*, Uppsala Universitets Årskrifi 1914. 2, Diss. Uppsala 1911 (treatment with bibliography to date). Most arguments adduced so far have been linguistic; a different approach may also prove helpful.



eastern affairs and on the other a possible explanation of how a Byzantine poem came only to survive in the west.

To return to Justin's policies. It is in no way surprising to find that while Justin was thus doing his best to meet western expectations, he also sought to conciliate the eastern bishops. We saw that Michael the Syrian said that his aim at his accession was the peace of the church,<sup>67</sup> and he tried to achieve it by doing his best to please both sides. It would be naive to suppose that emperors necessarily had a consistent 'religious policy' or, if they had, that they enforced it unswervingly throughout. Rather, each emperor was surrounded by individuals and groups with divergent interests; he had to attempt to strike some sort of balance between them—a balance that would change as circumstances changed. It is probable enough that Justin's first aim was in fact to restore unity after Justinian's final lapse into heresy, but he would only be likely to achieve it through compromise and apparent inconsistencies, as different interests came to the fore. The claims for monophysite sympathies in the imperial couple made by the monophysite historians must be approached with some caution, therefore. All parties in the religious disputes tried to claim imperial support<sup>68</sup> and no doubt Justin and Sophia were glad enough to have it so. We happen to know that Justin was in fact a devotee of the orthodox saint Symeon the Younger—though after Sophia had called in a sorcerer to cure Justin's madness the intercession of the saint could do no good.<sup>69</sup>

It is not easy to be certain about the sequence of events which led to the publication of Justin's edict addressed to monophysites. The final edict is given in detail by the orthodox Evagrius<sup>70</sup> and the monophysite Michael the Syrian.<sup>71</sup> But historians have been misled by Evagrius's dating, which telescopes the happenings in these years and appears to put the edict immediately after the conspiracy of Aetherius and Addaeus in 566.<sup>72</sup> Evagrius was writing more than twenty years later; but the contemporary John of Ephesus was himself one of the leaders of the monophysite bishops who were, as he tells us in great detail,

<sup>67</sup> Michael the Syrian, bk X cap 1.

<sup>68</sup> The patriarch Eutychius—*Vita Eutychii*, PG 86 col 2349; John Scholasticus—*Vita S. Symeoni Iunioris*, ed P. Van den Ven, *Subsidia Hagiographica* 32.1 (Brussels 1962) caps 202 seq.

<sup>69</sup> *Vita S. Symeoni Iunioris*, cap 208.

<sup>70</sup> HE bk V cap 4, translated by Frend pp 366–8. Evagrius is very hostile to Justin; compare HE bk V caps 1, 2.

<sup>71</sup> Michael the Syrian bk X cap 4.

<sup>72</sup> Compare Frend p 319, n 2; so Bury.

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imprisoned in the patriarchal palace. The framing of the edict resulted from the inclusion of corrections made after discussion by these bishops, together with other clauses deriving from an attempt to please the opposing party (whom John calls Nestorians). The result pleased no-one, and was rejected by the monophysite bishops.<sup>73</sup> No date emerges from John's passionate and anecdotal account—which gives a vivid picture of the warring factions trying to influence the emperor, with Anastasius the *quaestor* and the patriarch John already at the head of the Chalcedonians—but the account of Michael the Syrian, though heavily dependent on John, gives more information. According to this Justin opened negotiations immediately, calling an assembly of monophysite bishops in Constantinople and then holding a series of further meetings. All this resulted in a first edict presented to the monophysites by John Scholasticus at Callinicum on the Persian border.<sup>74</sup> This was thrown out by the monks; but negotiations continued in the capital, culminating in the formulation of a second edict, that now recorded by Michael and by Evagrius. This must also be the edict which John of Ephesus tells us was given such a rough ride; neither he nor Evagrius mention the earlier one.<sup>75</sup> John makes the rejection of the second edict the cause of the monophysite persecution which began in 572; he refers to the six years during which Justin was merciful to the monophysites,<sup>76</sup> and Michael seems to set the edict in the sixth year of Justin.<sup>77</sup> Hence 571—though Michael makes Justin's reign start in 568, not 565. But the dating of the earlier dealings with the monophysites are less clear; the edict of Callinicum could date from 567 or 568, the year of Radegund's mission. But Michael's narrative is not without its problems. The edict reported in book X chapter 4 is not set in a clear historical context. Justin is said to have threatened persecution to all who refused to accept it, and its rejection did indeed lead to persecution and the repeated exiling of the monophysite bishops. John of Ephesus is very clear that persecution began in 572. Yet Michael tells us that Justin gave up his concern for the peace of the church and turned to persecution after

<sup>73</sup> The edict—John of Ephesus HE bk I cap 19 seq; John was imprisoned himself—*ibid* bk I cap 22; bk II cap 4 seq; Michael the Syrian bk X cap 6. The sufferings of the bishops—John of Ephesus HE bk I cap 23. The circumstances of the composition of the *History*—John of Ephesus, HE bk II cap 50.

<sup>74</sup> Michael the Syrian bk X cap 2.

<sup>75</sup> But John refers to preliminary discussions: John of Ephesus HE bk I cap 17.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid* bk I cap 3; bk III cap 1.

<sup>77</sup> Michael the Syrian bk X cap 6.



Callinicum and, apparently, before the second edict, which is indeed presented as an ultimatum.<sup>77</sup> Brute force was used to compel monophysites to take orthodox communion, a general persecution was announced and the monophysite bishops were compelled to accept the emperor's edict and take communion in the presence of all the people in St Sophia.<sup>78</sup> There is certainly confusion in Michael's chronology, such as it is, and we are forced to conclude that he is not as sure a guide as has been supposed. The narrative of John of Ephesus, which he expressly follows at this point, has been elaborated and its main articulation (the connection of the edict with the opening of persecution after six years of Justin's reign) has been destroyed. Whether this is Michael's doing is not clear. We can say nothing as to the value of his possible other source, Cyrus of Batna, who wrote a Syriac history of Justin II and Tiberius, perhaps not long after the latter's death.<sup>79</sup> But even as it stands, Michael's account does not bear out Frend's picture of Justin turning to persecution in desperation only after the rejection of the edict.<sup>80</sup> With some hesitation I conclude that the edict which we now have does probably belong to 571, and that despite Michael's statements persecution did not seriously break out until after then. John was not merely a contemporary, but one of the main participants in the drama, and the story of Justin's persecution and the madness which he saw as a punishment for it was the *raison d'être* of this part of his history; we must stick closely to it and regard Michael as what he was—a late chronicler with no real understanding of the sequence of events.

It seems clear that the general tone of the final edict, again despite what Michael says, was as far as possible conciliatory towards the monophysites.<sup>81</sup> But it represented 'an attempt by the emperor to restore peace by a general formula without meeting the specific

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid* bk X caps 2 and 3.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid* bk X cap 3. John of Ephesus *HE* bk I caps 23 seq. seems rather to suggest that this followed the second edict. The persecution was vigorous and harsh (John of Ephesus *HE* bk II caps 9 and 25).

<sup>79</sup> J. B. Chabot, *Chronique de Michel le Syrien*, I (Paris 1924) p 31.

<sup>80</sup> Frend pp 321–3.

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid* p 322. Dr Philip Sherrard kindly confirmed for me that in his opinion the edict as reported by Evagrius 'left a door open' to the monophysite position, without itself lapsing from orthodoxy. Despite his low opinion of Justin (n 70 above) Evagrius seems to have reported the edict fairly; but it is significant that he includes the pro-Chalcedonian final clause omitted by Michael the Syrian (pointed out to me by Pauline Allen).

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monophysite demands'.<sup>82</sup> It was inevitably rejected, and John of Ephesus tells us why: the Nestorians, the bishops thought, had confused and mutilated it according to their own fancy; and though they had not ventured, through fear of the king, to expunge those expressions of his which were opposed to the two natures, yet they had managed to insert in it so much of their own, that while some parts were against the synod, others were strongly in its favour, and plainly were borrowed from it and on its side. . . . if it were to be proclaimed in the church, not a thousand such edicts, though fixed up in all parts and in every quarter, would bring about a unity, but produce rather schisms.<sup>83</sup>

Both John and Michael imply that Justin's aim was to achieve unity;<sup>84</sup> after the rejection of the edict the patriarch John tells the monophysite bishops 'it is you who prevent and hinder the unity of the church of God'. And until 571 it seems that Justin and Sophia pursued a moderate religious policy, steering a middle course between the various extremist views. The conciliation of the monophysites was only one part—though perhaps the most important part—of that policy.

We can in fact dimly discern in this reign a new sort of piety creeping over Byzantine life, the emperor setting the tone. In 574 the famous *acheiropoietos* image of Camuliana was solemnly brought to Constantinople.<sup>85</sup> Saint Symeon the Younger, the friend of Justin, defended icons by the analogy of imperial images.<sup>86</sup> Corippus stated for the first time the doctrine that Constantinople was a God-guarded city; it was soon to emerge as specially under the protection of the Mother of God.<sup>87</sup> Justin II's reign seems to mark a kind of apogee of imperial and Roman themes in official art, soon to be succeeded by a greater emphasis on the emperor's religious role.<sup>88</sup> Justin's activity as a patron of religious art was interpreted specifically as a sign of his piety.<sup>89</sup> Kitzinger has argued that it was the court which set the pattern and

<sup>82</sup> Frend p 322.

<sup>83</sup> John of Ephesus, *HE* bk I cap 20, trans Payne Smith.

<sup>84</sup> John of Ephesus, *HE* bk I cap 19; Michael the Syrian, bk X caps 1, 2.

<sup>85</sup> Cedrenus, *Historiarum compendium*, CSHByz 37–8 (1838–9) I p 685.

<sup>86</sup> PG 86 col 3215 (letter of saint Symeon to Justin II).

<sup>87</sup> *Iust* bk III line 333, 'res Romana dei est, terrenis non eget armis.' See N. Baynes, 'The Supernatural Defenders of Constantinople', *Byzantine Studies* (London 1955) pp 248–60.

<sup>88</sup> So A. Grabar, *L'Empereur dans l'art byzantin* (Paris 1935) pp 24–6, and see A. Cameron 'Corippus's poem on Justin II: a terminus of antique art', *Annali della Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa*, 3 ser, 5.1 (1975) pp 125–65.

<sup>89</sup> Theophanes, ed de Boor, p 241; Zonaras, *Epitome historiarum*, CSHByz 50 (1897) bk XIV, cap 10.



officially encouraged the greater general emphasis on pietism, and in particular supported the contemporary growth of the cult of images, as a means of reinforcing the religious side of the emperor's position.<sup>90</sup> Perhaps it is not inappropriate to tie in the increasingly religious emphasis in imperial coronation rites which was taking place during this period, shown very clearly in the completely religious interpretation which Corippus gives to his long account of Justin's own coronation.<sup>91</sup> There is certainly a shift at this point in Byzantine life, which is expressed outwardly in terms of a change in the religiosity of Constantinople. Increased devotion to the *Theotokos*, the steady development of icon worship, an altered focus for imperial ideology, the coming official assumption of *basileus* as an imperial title<sup>92</sup>—all these lie behind the religious and political crisis posed by the Avar and Persian attack on the city in 626<sup>93</sup> and the changes to come in the seventh century.

As if looking through a glass darkly, we can see that the reign of Justin II was critical for these developments. Before the pathetic ravages of his illness took a hold,<sup>94</sup> Justin, with the help of Sophia, was energetic and ambitious. His financial measures were unpopular and earned him a bad press;<sup>95</sup> his foreign policy may have been ill judged.<sup>96</sup> But he was a most vigorous patron of the arts,<sup>97</sup> and in no area more conspicuously so than in that of religious art.<sup>98</sup> He and Sophia seem to have had a special veneration for the Virgin, building a chapel for the Virgin's robe at the great church of Blachernae and a reliquary for her

<sup>90</sup> E. Kitzinger, 'The Cult of Images in the Period before Iconoclasm', *DOP* 8 (1954) pp 83–150 esp 121 seq. For the early development of image worship see also N. Baynes, 'The Icons before Iconoclasm', *BSt* pp 226–39. The most subtle treatment will be found in [P.] Brown, 'A Dark-Age Crisis: aspects of the Iconoclastic Controversy', *EHR* 88 (1973) pp 1 seq. (see esp pp 10 seq, 17 seq, for an alternative explanation of the rise of icons).

<sup>91</sup> *Iust* bk II lines 84 seq. with my notes.

<sup>92</sup> By Heraclius in 629: I. Shahid, 'The Iranian Factor in Byzantium during the Reign of Heraclius', *DOP* 26 (1972) pp 295, 317–20. Not by Maurice (Freund p 320 n 1).

<sup>93</sup> Brown p 14; A. Frolov, 'La dédicace de Constantinople dans la tradition byzantine', *RHR* 127 (1944) pp 61–127, esp 94 seq.

<sup>94</sup> John of Ephesus, *HE* bk III caps 2 seq tells some lurid stories.

<sup>95</sup> Evagrius, *HE* bk V cap 1; John of Ephesus, *HE* bk V caps 20, compare bk III caps II, 22; Gregory *HF* bk IV cap 40 (= Paulus Diaconus, *HL* bk III cap II). The financial policy was announced in *Novel* 148 (a. 566); compare Corippus, *In laudem Iustini* bk II lines 254 seq, 361 seq.

<sup>96</sup> Stein pp 4 seq.

<sup>97</sup> D. Talbot Rice, *The Beginnings of Christian Art* (London 1957) pp 95–6 (remarks which can be supplemented very extensively). Theophanes calls Justin φιλοκτίστης (ed de Boor, p 241.29).

<sup>98</sup> Compare the passages quoted in n 89.

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girdle at the church of Chalcoprateia, near St Sophia.<sup>99</sup> Among the many churches which he is said to have 'adorned' were St Sophia and the Holy Apostles.<sup>100</sup> The sending of the relic and reliquary to Poitiers was then more than an isolated gesture, and had more than a passing significance. For political and religious reasons Justin was ready to honour the catholic Franks, but he and Sophia seized the opportunity presented by Radegund to do so in a typical way—reinforcing devotion to relics and the cult of the holy cross, and using an artefact produced under imperial patronage to demonstrate imperial involvement. If what survives is really Radegund's reliquary, it is the oldest western Byzantine enamel. Its iconography and style associate it with the cross sent to Rome and place it alongside the most characteristic productions of this stylistically ambiguous period.<sup>101</sup> Justin's gift to Radegund, the inspiration of some of Venantius's best poems and the object of devotion in the convent of the Holy Cross to this day, is one of the best testimonies to the imagination of this imperial couple who have suffered so badly from conventional historical sources.

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<sup>99</sup> See R. Janin, *La Géographie ecclésiastique de l'empire byzantin* I.3: *Les églises et les monastères* (2 ed Paris 1969) pp 169 seq, 237 seq; M. Jugie, 'L'Église de Chalcoprateia et le culte de la ceinture de la Sainte Vierge à Constantinople', *EO* 16 (1913) pp 308 seq.

<sup>100</sup> Theophanes, ed de Boor pp 241 seq; see Cameron note on *Iust* IV lines 290 seq.

<sup>101</sup> On the iconography see Mâle p 295. For the delicate task of interpreting stylistic features in this transitional period see first E. Kitzinger, 'Byzantine Art in the Period between Justinian and Iconoclasm', *Berichte zum XI Internationalen Byzantinisten-Kongress*, (Munich 1958) pp 18 seq. with the same author's 'Mosaic Pavements in the Greek East and the question of a "Renaissance" under Justinian', *Actes du VI<sup>e</sup> Congrès international des études byzantines*, Paris 1948, 2 (Paris 1951) pp 209 seq; K. Weitzmann, 'The Mosaic in St. Catherine's Monastery on Mt. Sinai', *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 110 (Philadelphia 1966) pp 392 seq; *Studies in Classical and Byzantine MSS. Illumination* (Chicago 1971) pp 126–50, 'The Classical Heritage in the Art of Constantinople'.

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## THE EMPRESS SOPHIA

Charles Diehl's *Impératrices de Byzance*<sup>(1)</sup>, while devoting separate chapters to Athenais-Eudocia and Theodora, ignores completely the Empress Sophia, wife of Justin II (565-578). Yet this lady had an interesting and in some ways a unique career, being dominant both during her husband's lifetime and after his death. Her own personality was strong enough to exalt her to an influence and status unusual during Justin's reign, while the circumstances of her husband's madness placed her in the most powerful position which a Byzantine empress could occupy — that of directing the choice first of a caesar and then of the next emperor. Indeed she was able to exercise the latter task not once but twice. Our sources are ample and contemporary, notably the Syriac *Ecclesiastical History* of John of Ephesus, an intimate friend of Sophia's protégé and Justin's successor, Tiberius II (578-582). There is more contemporary information in Evagrius's *Ecclesiastical History*, in chronicles and surprisingly enough in Gregory of Tours' *History of the Franks*. With these sources to draw upon, even allowing for the personal and religious bias of the Monophysite John of Ephesus, it is possible to put together a detailed account of Sophia's influence and career from the later years of Justinian to the early years of Maurice, and to see a unique personality in action, bending and moulding the Imperial power for her own ends. No other Byzantine empress so far had taken such flagrant power into her own hands, and the continuing process of policy making in which Sophia indulged matches anything done by her predecessors.

## I. BEFORE THE DEATH OF JUSTINIAN.

Sophia emerges into the light of publicity only at the end of Justinian's reign. She was a relative of Theodora, probably the

(1) Paris (1959).

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niece<sup>(2)</sup>, and if so the daughter of Comito or Anastasia, Theodora's sister<sup>(3)</sup>. When Justin II came to the throne in 565 he already had a married daughter<sup>(4)</sup>, so Sophia's birth may be placed somewhat earlier than 530 at the latest. She married Justin, son of Justinian's sister Vigilantia<sup>(5)</sup>; it was a prudent arrangement, but nevertheless one which Sophia soon turned to good advantage. Justin held the post of *cura palatii*, nominally the majordomo of the palace and up to this point not very prominent; with Justin's tenure of the office however and during his reign and later it became a sign of special honour reserved for members of the Imperial family<sup>(6)</sup>. In a career spent in the capital on civilian service (unlike his cousin and namesake Justin, son of Germanus) he was able to make useful contacts at court and gained the support of the senate and high ministers which was enough to get him the throne in 565; he had also been used to quell faction riots in 562<sup>(7)</sup> and was able to take a strong line with the factions at his accession<sup>(8)</sup>, a difficult moment at which there was no hint of trouble<sup>(9)</sup>. But the one thing which Justin lacked was open designation by Justinian as the heir to the throne. Nothing formal was done, though it was normal practice for an elderly emperor to designate his successor, even to crowning him himself<sup>(10)</sup>; thus a cast-iron way was provided of avoiding succession troubles. Yet although Justinian had himself been coopted in this way<sup>(11)</sup> he refused to face the problem of his own succession. The poet Corippus, writing a panegyric on Justin II's accession, does his best to persuade

(2) JOH. EPH. *HE* II.10, but cf. VICT. TUNN. a. 567 *neptis*.

(3) PROC., *Anecd.* 9.

(4) CORIPPUS, *Iust.* II. 285.

(5) JOH. EPH., *loc. cit.*; VICT. TUNN., *loc. cit.*

(6) M. F. MARTROYE, 'L'origine du *curopalate*', *Mélanges Schlumberger* I (Paris, 1924), 79 ff. Cf. COR., *Iust.* I. 135; II. 284 f. (Justin II's son-in-law Baduarius succeeded him in the office); E. STEIN, *Histoire du Bas-Empire* II (1949), 746; J. B. BURY, *Imp. Admin. System* (London, 1911), 33 f. The brother of the emperor Maurice was also *cura palatii* (Preger II. 237-8; Theophanes p. 277 de Boor).

(7) THEOPH., p. 239.

(8) COR., *Iust.* II. 231, 336.

(9) Cf. VICT. TUNN. a. 567, EVAGRIUS, *HE* V. 1.

(10) For Leo II cf. *De Caer.* I. 94, p. 431.

(11) *De Caer.* I. 95, p. 432 f.

his audience that Justinian *did* designate Justin<sup>(12)</sup>, but it is all too clear that nothing public was done; 'you were Caesar to judge from your actions', the poet says<sup>(13)</sup>, merely emphasising the lack of legal status. He finally has to resort to the hackneyed device of inserting the dying words in which Justinian entrusted the throne to Justin — needless to say heard only by a faithful minister<sup>(14)</sup>.

But if Justinian was reluctant to opt decisively for Justin, Sophia was only too ready to lend her aid. The Monophysite writer John of Ephesus tells us that she had been an open Monophysite from her youth during the lifetime of Theodora (d. 548) until the 560's, when it was pointed out to her that Justinian would hardly choose for his successor one who could come under the faintest suspicion of Monophysite sympathies<sup>(15)</sup>. She therefore converted, just in time (it was only three years before Justinian's death), but not soon enough to achieve her object — Justin's designation as Caesar.

Now John's insinuations may be suspect (they are after all hard to square with Sophia's later support of Monophysite persecution<sup>(16)</sup>) but there were certainly those to whom her support in religious matters was even at this stage a matter for concern. The patriarch Eutychius, to be exiled early in 565 after refusing to agree to Justinian's decree in support of Aphthartodocetism<sup>(17)</sup>, claimed not only to have foretold Justin's accession but also to have seen in a dream Justin and Sophia depicted in Imperial costume on a sword<sup>(18)</sup>. Eutychius also claimed to have introduced the future Tiberius II to Justin — a fateful meeting, for Justin was to favour Tiberius and Sophia was to choose him to share the Imperial power; needless to say, Eutychius foretold Tiberius's accession as well<sup>(19)</sup>. Despite his biographer's wish to present the patriarch as well disposed to all the emperors of the period, Eutychius was not in fact restored

(12) E.g. *Iust.* I. 145 f.

(13) I. 138 *dispositu nam Caesar eras*.

(14) IV. 335 f.

(15) *HE* II. 10. But cf. MICHAEL THE SYRIAN, *Chron.* X. 7.

(16) On the other hand John is very well informed about the marriage of Theodora's family.

(17) Cf. E. STEIN, *op. cit.* (n. 6), II, 686 n. 1.

(18) *V. Eutych.*, PG. 86. 2349.

(19) *Ibid.*

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until 577; thus his bid for the support of Justin and Sophia, if indeed it took place, was not successful. His successor as patriarch in 565, John of Sirimis (usually called John Scholasticus), made the same claim to have predicted Justin's accession<sup>(20)</sup> and was prominent both at the moment when Justin came to the throne<sup>(21)</sup> and later during the persecutions of Monophysites<sup>(22)</sup>. More than one ecclesiastical party in Constantinople was therefore interested in gaining the support of Justin, as the likely heir, and we already find Sophia's name linked as a matter of course with that of her husband. By the time of Justin's accession it is taken for granted that she is as important as her husband, and perhaps even already the dominant partner in the formation of policy.

## II. JUSTIN AND SOPHIA, THE 'TWO LIGHTS OF THE WORLD'<sup>(23)</sup>

When the time came, it was seen that Justin the son of Vigilantia had the support of those who mattered. First, he was in the city, second, he had placed his protégé, Tiberius, in the key post of count of the excubitors<sup>(24)</sup>; finally the highest officials, the senators and the patriarch supported him. No one wanted trouble and the whole affair went off without a hitch<sup>(25)</sup>, largely because the senate unusually asserted itself and got all the essential parts of the coronation and inauguration ceremony performed behind closed doors in the Palace, before the factions, the people or the army could register any protest<sup>(26)</sup>. The people were presented with a *fait accompli* — a crowned emperor appearing to them in the Hippodrome<sup>(27)</sup> after he had already been acclaimed in the Palace<sup>(28)</sup>. But there could still have been trouble, and that there was none was at least partly due to

(20) V. S. Symeonis Iunioris, ed. P. VAN DEN VEN (1962), c. 202.

(21) COR., *Iust.* II. 160 f.

(22) Cf. JOH. EPH., *HE* I. 11; III. 2.

(23) COR., *Iust.* II. 171; III. 71.

(24) COR., *Iust.* I. 202 f.

(25) See note 9 above.

(26) See my forthcoming commentary on Corippus's *In laudem Iustini minoris*. The essential section is from II. 84 to the end of bk. II.

(27) COR., *Iust.* II. 299 f.

(28) *Ibid.*, II. 165 f.

the initiative of Sophia, to whom the murder of Justin's only serious rival, his cousin (also Justin) is expressly attributed by the sources<sup>(29)</sup>. Sophia remains in the background in the actual ceremonies of inauguration (she was crowned Augusta by Justin<sup>(30)</sup> and this would have been on the following day), but the acclamations as represented by Corippus hail her as much as Justin<sup>(31)</sup>; they are already a pair, as we shall see.

Sophia's importance is very clear from Corippus's poem. Written as early as 566-7<sup>(32)</sup>, and concerned solely with the inauguration of Justin himself, it nevertheless depicts Sophia as equally important. Whenever there is a chance to mention her she is brought in; she is given equal space in the prayer section preceding the account of the inauguration proper<sup>(33)</sup>, and the elaborate account of the church of St. Sophia is introduced mainly as a compliment to the empress who shared its name<sup>(34)</sup>. All this indicates that she was the dominant partner even before Justin came to the throne. Early in the reign there was a major scandal culminating in the execution of two leading senators<sup>(35)</sup>, an affair which had extensive ramifications in the court circles of the capital. So far as we can see Sophia was not involved, but she had certainly been a mover in Justin's opening gesture — the repayment of debts and cancellation of arrears of taxation<sup>(36)</sup>. There had clearly been a financial crisis at the end of Justinian's reign<sup>(37)</sup>; Justin not only remitted taxes but also repaid forced loans exacted by Justinian from wealthy financiers<sup>(38)</sup>. Now Theophanes tells a curiously similar story under the year 567, according to which Sophia summoned τούς τε ἀργυροπράτας καὶ τοὺς σημαδαρίους (?) and or-

(29) JOH. BICLAR., s.a. II. Iustini — 'Iustinus filius Germani ... factione Sophiae Augustae in Alexandria occiditur'. A more elaborate account in EVAGRIUS, *HE* V. 2, also implicating Sophia. Cf. AGATHIAS, *Hist.* IV. 22.

(30) THEOPHANES, p. 241.

(31) COR., *Iust.* II. 168 f.

(32) See *Byzantion* 37 (1967), 12.

(33) See below, cf. also I. 115 f.

(34) Cf. esp. IV. 263 f.

(35) EUSTRAT., *V. Eutych.*, PG 86. 2361; EVAGRIUS, *HE* V. 3; THEOPHANES, p. 242. 9 f; JOH. BICLAR., a. 568 (sic); cf. COR., *Iust.* I. 60-61 and my comm. ad loc.

(36) COR., *Iust.* II. 361 ff.

(37) Cf. THEOPHANES, pp. 237-8; Nov. 148, a. 566.

(38) COR., loc. cit.

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dered them to return the deeds to those who owed them money, for which she earned great popularity<sup>(39)</sup>. This is an extraordinary intervention by an empress in financial affairs and it is difficult not to believe that it is a reference to the sequence of events narrated by Corippus at the beginning of the reign. The *ἀργυροπράται* ('silver-smiths') are at this period the bankers, or financiers in general, men who had been antagonised by Justinian<sup>(40)</sup> and very probably identifiable with Corippus's *turba virorum*<sup>(41)</sup>. Theophanes's dating at this period is not reliable and we must surely see in this anecdote Sophia intervening in a more delicate and dangerous situation than Theophanes suggests. And though Corippus naturally represents Justin's new policy of refusing to pay Avar subsidies not in realistically fiscal terms but wholly in terms of Imperial pride and courage<sup>(42)</sup>, it is tempting to see Sophia at work here too. Hostile critics found most to blame in Justin's reign in his notorious parsimony and frugality (which they dubbed greed<sup>(43)</sup>); we have at least some indication that Sophia was as much responsible for these policies as Justin himself.

Sophia is again prominent in 572, when she figures in another curious anecdote told by Theophanes<sup>(44)</sup>. In this year Justin's madness came upon him and he lashed out at his brother Baduarius<sup>(45)</sup> who was count of the stables. Sophia reproached Justin, who instantly repented and went to the stables to effect a pathetic reconciliation. Whether we are to refer this incident to Justin's brother or son-in-law matters little; the point is the prominence of Sophia as soon as Justin becomes incapacitated.

Justin's coinage reveals the dominant position of Sophia. She is the first empress to appear on Byzantine coins together with the em-

(39) THEOPH., p. 242. 21 f., cf. ZONARAS, XIV. 10, derived from Theophanes.

(40) Cf. the plot in 562 — THEOPH., p. 237 f.

(41) II. 362 — a guild?

(42) COR., *Iust.* III. 151 f. 311 f.

(43) E.g. EVAGRIUS, *HE* V. 1; GREG. TUR. *HF* IV. 40; PAULUS DIACONUS, *HL* III. 11; JOH. EPH. *HE* V. 20, cf. III. 11, 22.

(44) P. 246. For the inner history of Justin's reign see K. GROH, *Geschichte des oströmischen Kaisers Justin II nebst den Quellen* (Leipzig, 1889).

(45) Baduarius was actually Justin's son-in-law; his brother was Marcellus — COR., *Iust.* II. 282 ff.

peror<sup>(46)</sup>, and the bronze issues of Justin are very striking, showing the Imperial pair enthroned in full Imperial dress with diadem hung with the pendant jewels familiar from the mosaics of Justinian and Theodora in San Vitale<sup>(47)</sup>. Corippus's panegyric on Justin's accession fully reflects the conception of the Imperial power as shared; not merely are there constant references to Sophia herself but also to the *domini* in general terms, and acclamations hail both equally<sup>(48)</sup>. Official documents show the same phenomenon, citing both together<sup>(49)</sup>. In the Greek epigrams from this reign the two likewise appear as a pair — as the *θεσπεσίη συγκυρία*<sup>(50)</sup>. Several of them, like Corippus, make elaborate plays with Sophia's name<sup>(51)</sup>. It was thought essential for poets of the day to pay as much attention to the empress as to the emperor. And not only local poets: Venantius Fortunatus devoted an elaborate poem to the theme of the gift of a piece of the True Cross in a splendid reliquary received by St. Radegund at Poitiers from Justin and Sophia<sup>(52)</sup>, giving Sophia as much space as Justin and comparing her to Helena the mother of Constantine. On the surviving cross sent by Justin to Rome, now in the Vatican treasury<sup>(53)</sup>, busts of Justin and Sophia occupy the arms of the Cross with a medallion of the Lamb of God in between; the style is stiff and formalized like that of the Stuma and Riha patens, indicative of the new piety epitomized by Justin and Sophia themselves that was to bring the image of Camuliana to Constantinople and which displayed itself, among other examples, in the dedication by Justin and Sophia

(46) WROTH, *Imp. Byz. Coins* I (London, 1908), xix.

(47) WROTH, I xix, pl. XI. 8-11; A. R. BELLINGER, *Cat. of the Byz. Coins in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection and the Whittemore Collection* I (Washington, 1966), pl. L. 22a f. Cf. A. GRABAR, *L'Empereur dans l'art byzantin* (Paris, 1936), 27.

(48) Cf. esp. II. 198 f. and my note on I. 23; cf. n. 22 above.

(49) E. STEIN, *Studien zur Geschichte des byz. Reiches, vornehmlich unter den Kaisern Justinus II und Tiberius Constantinus* (Stuttgart, 1919), 54 n. 3, citing P. Cairo Cat. II. 67243 and P. MUNICH I. n. 1, 2. 45; cf. also KAIBEL, *Suppl.* 1064a, surely Justin II and Sophia.

(50) *Anth. Plan.* 41. 3 (probably but not certainly Justin and Sophia), cf. *AP* IX. 779, 810.

(51) E.g. *AP* IX. 813.2, 803. Cf. e.g. COR., *Iust.* I. 22, II. 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100.

(52) *App. carm.* II, cf. GREG. TUR. IX. 40.

(53) H. PIERCE and R. TYLER, *L'Art Byzantin II* (Paris, 1932), pl. 136, 199 b; J. BECKWITH, *The Art of Constantinople*, 2nd ed. (London, 1968), fig. 55.



of a reliquary for the Virgin's girdle in the church of the Virgin at Chalcostrateia<sup>(54)</sup>. And this emphasis on the married pair showed itself in secular as well as religious art, for example the two bronze statues mentioned by John of Ephesus<sup>(55)</sup> and the group set up at the harbour of Sophia comprising Justin, Sophia, their daughter Arabia and Justin's mother Vigilantia<sup>(56)</sup>. It is not then at all surprising that Justin should have named the rebuilt harbour of Julian after his wife, and called his new palace the Sophianae, thus causing understandable confusion to ancient and modern topographers alike<sup>(57)</sup>.

It looks as though Sophia's influence showed itself especially in religious matters. Justin's own piety was formidable<sup>(58)</sup>, but it was matched by that of his wife. Corippus attributes to them complementary prayers before Justin's inauguration, Justin's to God, Sophia's to the Virgin<sup>(59)</sup>. Sophia's is a model of contemporary addresses to the Theotokos, with its self-conscious word plays and juxtaposition of opposites; it can be closely paralleled from the near contemporary Akathistos hymn, from Romanos' hymn on the Nativity, from sermons delivered in 429 by Proclus of Constantinople and from two epigrams probably by Cyrus of Panopolis<sup>(60)</sup>. The two latter items bring the ideas behind Sophia's prayer into the mainstream of Eastern veneration of the Theotokos which had culminated in the Council of Ephesus in 431 and which emphasised both the Virgin as

(54) Camuliana image and new piety: E. KITZINGER, 'The Cult of Images in the period before Iconoclasm', *DOP* 8 (1954), esp. 121 f.; reliquary: see R. JANIN, *La Géographie ecclésiastique de l'empire byzantin* I. iii, *Les Églises et les monastères* (Paris, 1953), 250, n° 112, cf. Preger II. 263.

(55) *HE* III. 24.

(56) PREGER, II. 184, cf. 230 (Narses instead of Vigilantia). For a similar group at the Milion (Sophia, Arabia and Helena — i. e. with her daughter and her niece) cf. PREGER, I. 38, II. 166.

(57) See *Byzantion* 37 (1967), 13 ff. and my comm. on COR., *Iust.* I. 97 f.

(58) ZONARAS, XIV. 10.

(59) COR., *Iust.* II. 11 f., 47 f.

(60) See my comm. on COR., *Iust.* II. 52 f. Akathistos hymn: cf. the ed. by C. TRYPANIS, *Fourteen early Byzantine Cantica*, *Wiener byz. Studien* XIV (1968); PROCLUS OF CONSTANTINOPLE: *PG* 65.680 f.; epp. of Cyrus: *Anth. Graec.* iii, ed. Cougny (1890) i, 355-6. There is also a very striking parallelism with the poem *In laudem Mariae* attributed to Venantius Fortunatus; a direct connection between the two seems very probable. For other literary and epigraphic parallels see my comm.

the Theotokos and the mystery of the Incarnation. The technical religious language of Sophia's prayer links the passage with another in Corippus's poem where the poet alludes to a contemporary event in which Sophia was again prominent. Within an extended allusion to the cathedral of St. Sophia (in itself a compliment to Sophia<sup>(61)</sup>), Corippus inserts a virtual paraphrase of the Creed of Constantinople which Justin ordered to be read in all Orthodox churches before the Lord's Prayer<sup>(62)</sup>. This lengthy paraphrase, full of technical detail and precise linguistic borrowings from the Creed itself<sup>(63)</sup> is introduced for a definite purpose. Quite out of place in its context, it nevertheless serves as a compliment to Justin's decree, which was, unlike his later edict<sup>(64)</sup>, a firmly orthodox gesture. We must be right in assuming that Sophia was associated with this important move in religious matters, and indeed Venantius makes the same assumption in his poem on the arrival of the relic of the True Cross at Poitiers. The first section of that poem is devoted to a compliment to Justin's decree not unlike that of Corippus, and the whole poem treats Justin and Sophia very strikingly as a pair; Venantius begins with a definition of the Trinity, very similar to the lengthy definition in Justin's later edict and similar also to that in Corippus's poem<sup>(65)</sup>. This 'right definition' of orthodox doctrine is firmly associated with the initiative of Justin<sup>(66)</sup>, and with Justin is associated the *opima fides* of Sophia<sup>(67)</sup>. The date of the arrival of the relic in Poitiers cannot have been much after 566-7 because of the poem's clear allusions to the decree and to the return of the exiled bishops synchronized with Justin's accession<sup>(68)</sup>. It was apparently Sophia's own initiative that answered Radegund's request for a relic so generously<sup>(69)</sup>, a response which

(61) *Iust.* IV. 264 f.

(62) COR., *Iust.* IV. 294 f. Cf. JOH. BICLAR., a. 567 (sic).

(63) See my comm. *ad loc.* E.g. IV. 302 *natus, non factus, plenum de lumine lumen* etc.

(64) EVAGRIUS, *HE* V. 4.

(65) *App. carm.* II. 1 f., cf. EVAGR., *loc. cit.*, COR., *Iust.* IV. 294 f.

(66) *Esp.* II. 16, 23 f.

(67) I. 55, cf. II. 51-94.

(68) II. 39 f., cf. 25 *nova purpura*.

(69) I. 55 f. For the affair in general and subsequent scandals see S. DILL, *Roman Society in Gaul in the Merovingian Age* (London, 1926), 273 f.

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resulted not merely in Venantius's poem to Justin and Sophia but also in several other celebratory poems, among them two of the most famous of all Christian hymns — *Pange, lingua* and *Vexilla regis prodeunt* (70). The relic itself was received with pomp, though not without acrimonious disagreements (71), and the remains of the reliquary can be seen today (72). Sophia was, it seems, not merely concerned with religious policy as such but also with the reputation of the Imperial government abroad.

Later in the reign we find Sophia firmly associated with the persecution of Monophysites. It is not easy to know how much credence to place on John of Ephesus's story of her own conversion from Monophysitism (73); in his account of the edict issued just before the persecution, John may similarly be exaggerating the degree to which Justin was prepared to do a deal with the Monophysites over the terms of the edict (74). But Justin did pardon and recall the exiled Monophysite bishops at the same time (75) and it may be that John is in fact as trustworthy as his own apologist claims (76). From the sixth year of the reign of Justin, however, Sophia and Justin are said to have been equally under the influence of the orthodox patriarch John Scholasticus, and both to have taken an active part in the suppression of Monophysitism by visiting monasteries, offering gifts to those monks ready to convert and sending to exile, imprisonment or torture all who resisted (77). As Sophia had been associated in the negotiations over the edict of orthodoxy (78), so now she is fully implicated with the emperor in the persecution. Another of Justin's favourites, the quaestor Anastasius, dedicatee of Corippus's panegyric, is blamed by John for exercising undue influence on the emperor in persecuting Monophysites but, like the patriarch John and Justin him-

(70) VENANTIUS, *carm.* II. 1-7.

(71) The bishop of Poitiers, Maroveus, would have nothing to do with it and the ceremony had to be conducted by Eufronius, the bishop of Tours.

(72) Cf. Sir M. CONWAY, 'St. Radegund's Reliquary at Poitiers', *Antiquaries' Journal* 3 (1923), 1 ff.

(73) *HE* II. 10, p. 3 above. Cf. also *HE* II. 8-9.

(74) I. 19 f. Similarly MICHAEL THE SYRIAN, *Chron.* X. 2-4.

(75) VENANTIUS, *app. carm.* II. 39 f.

(76) *HE* I. 30.

(77) *JOH. EPH.*, *HE* I. 11; for the date, cf. III. 1.

(78) *Ibid.* I. 26.

self, was destined to suffer for his sins — in this case by a particularly spectacular display of possession (79).

No doubt like many another, John of Ephesus was sure he knew why Justin went mad — as a punishment for his evil-doing in punishing the Monophysites (80). But Sophia had a different version — it was because he had not paid her enough attention (81). 'The kingdom came through me and it has come back to me', she said (82), 'and as for him, he is chastised and has fallen into this trial on my account, because he did not value me sufficiently, and vexed me'. According to John 'she was considered as having spoken wickedly'. Nevertheless she inevitably came to the fore as a result of Justin's illness, first turning to a sorcerer called Timotheus and incurring the threat of punishment from St. Symeon the Younger (83). When this was unsuccessful she needed male support; the idea of a woman acting as regent was not acceptable even to a spirited personality such as Sophia's, and she now fostered the appointment of Tiberius as Caesar (84). She no longer had to carry on alone (85) and in time she might hope to marry the new Caesar (86). Likewise Pulcheria had not thought of carrying on alone after the death of Theodosius II, but had found Marcian to marry. During that difficult period, however, from the onset of Justin's illness until Tiberius's appointment, Sophia had tried to exploit her position by sending in her own name to Chosroes an appeal not to make war on a defenceless female with a sick husband; the attempt was successful, insofar as she was able to buy a three years' truce and thus extricate Tiberius from the threat of military disaster (87). Now Justin was granted a respite long enough to

(79) *Ibid.*, II. 29.

(80) *Ibid.*, III. 1, cf. II. 26; III. 4.

(81) *Ibid.*, III. 4.

(82) Trans. Payne-Smith.

(83) *V. S. Symeonis Iunioris*, c. 208.

(84) EVAGR., *HE* V. 13 *Βουλευμασι Σοφίας*; *JOH. EPH.*, *HE* III. 5; GREG. TUR., *HF* V. 19, cf. IV. 40. The date was 574.

(85) Cf. GREG. TUR., *HF* V. 19 *per solam Sophiam Augustam eius imperium regiretur*.

(86) *JOH. EPH.*, *HE* III. 7.

(87) EVAGR., *HE* V. 12; *JOH. EPH.*, *HE* V. 8; MENANDER, *frags.* 11. 1-3. It seems to put this after 574. John's chronology of Justin's sickness does not work out (cf. III. 1, 5, 6) and the statement at III. 5 that he had been ill for 5 years (of confusion)

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appoint Tiberius Caesar, in an affecting speech in which he asked God and the people to forgive him his mistakes<sup>(88)</sup>. The speech was so moving and eloquent that people thought it had been dictated by an angel<sup>(89)</sup>.

### III. SOPHIA AND TIBERIUS II

For Sophia, however, things did not turn out as she had hoped. Tiberius was tall, handsome, kindhearted and charitable<sup>(90)</sup>. No surprise, then, that Sophia, not yet ready to take a back seat, should been attracted to him. But his charity went too far; it gave him a good press in the chronicles<sup>(91)</sup>, but even John of Ephesus has to comment on his extravagance<sup>(92)</sup>. Sophia was displeased and sharply criticised him for it<sup>(93)</sup>. 'You have reduced the state to poverty', she would say; 'the money which it took me years to accumulate you are spending in no time at all'<sup>(94)</sup>. Justin's reign had been marked from the first by a determination to save money<sup>(95)</sup> and now we find Sophia specifically claiming the policy as her own. She is not included in the hostile comments which Justin's policy earned from contemporary writers<sup>(96)</sup> but that does not mean that she did not share in the making of it.

But there was worse to come from Tiberius. The fact was that he already had not only a wife but also three children. Sophia did her

before Tiberius's appointment as Caesar cannot be accepted. John does not seem to be confusing the appointment of Tiberius as Caesar with his appointment as Augustus in 578 (cf. III. 6 fin.), so the figures at III. 5 must be wrong. It was the loss of Dara which had brought on Justin's illness (EVAGR., *HE* V. 11; THEOPHYLACT III. 11. 3).

(88) EVAGRIUS, *HE* V. 13; JOH. EPH. *HE* III. 5; THEOPHYLACT III. 11. 8; THEOPHANE, p. 247 (speech transferred to 577 — p. 248).

(89) JOH. EPH., *loc. cit.*

(90) EVAGR., *HE* V. 13.

(91) EVAGR. *loc. cit.*; GREG. TUR., *HF* V. 19; VI. 30, surely from a Greek source (cf. *aelymosinarium*); PAULUS DIACONUS, *HL* III. 11.

(92) *HE* III. 11.

(93) *Loc. cit.*, cf. GREG. TUR., *HF* V. 19.

(94) GREG. TUR., *loc. cit.* *Quod ego multis annis congregavi tu infra paucis temporibus prodegi dispergis*. Cf. JOH. EPH., *HE* III. 14, V. 20 see above.

(95) Cf. NOV. 148, a. 566.

(96) EVAGR., *HE* V. 1; GREG. TUR., *HF* IV. 40, V. 19, 30 (= PAULUS DIACONUS *HL* III. 11).

best to ignore Ino's existence and successfully prevented her from entering the palace for the whole four years during which Tiberius was Caesar. She was so jealous of her own position that before making Tiberius Caesar she had forced him to swear on oath that she herself would continue to be duly honoured after the death of Justin<sup>(97)</sup>. And even when in lucid moments Justin tried to persuade her to allow Tiberius to have his wife with him she angrily refused, vowing that she could never give up the kingdom to another nor let another woman enter the palace<sup>(98)</sup>. So Tiberius was compelled to instal his family in the palace of Hormisdas and visit them only at night. Sophia's final attempt during this period was to propose that he cast off Ino and marry either herself or her daughter, but the upright Tiberius gave her the humiliation of a refusal and Sophia was reduced to the expedient of refusing to permit the noble ladies of the court to pay their respects to the Caesar's wife. No wonder that Ino could not stand the awkwardness and left the city, making Tiberius's problems of commuting all the more acute<sup>(99)</sup>. Justin's death, as Sophia must have realised, would change the situation completely: when it occurred Tiberius sent for Ino, who was renamed with the more suitable name Anastasia<sup>(100)</sup>, and Sophia, though bitterly upset, was powerless to resist. Even so, the matter had to be dealt with the utmost speed and discretion: Ino clearly feared Sophia's influence, for she gave her escort the slip and returned to Constantinople in a boat with only her children for companions. The moment she reached the city she was taken to the Palace and to the accompaniment of faction rioting was invested with the purple<sup>(101)</sup>. All these details, which ring so true, are supplied only by John of Ephesus, admittedly hostile to Sophia. Yet Theophanes preserves an even less complimentary version, according to which Sophia did not even know that Tiberius was married until she heard that Ino had been acclaimed Augusta<sup>(102)</sup>. According to this version it was well known that Sophia had a fancy

(97) JOH. EPH., *HE* III. 7.

(98) *Ibid.*

(99) *Ibid.*

(100) JOH. EPH., *HE* III. 9; THEOPHANE, p. 249. The renaming of Ino to Anastasia, the Blues wanting her to be called Anastasia and the Greens Helena.

(101) JOH. EPH., *loc. cit.*

(102) THEOPHANE, *loc. cit.*

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for Tiberius and was hoping to marry him herself<sup>(103)</sup>. But John provides less lurid and more circumstantial details: besides, he had himself been an intimate of Tiberius since his earliest days at the court of Justin<sup>(104)</sup>.

A rebuff of such a personal kind was more than enough to set Sophia against Tiberius. Not only had she openly committed herself to affection for a younger and handsome man, but she had been rejected not for a young and attractive girl but for an ordinary middle-aged woman. Tiberius had first been betrothed to Ino's daughter by her first marriage, but after the girl and her father had both died he had married the mother<sup>(105)</sup>; and all this had happened some time before, for they already had three children when he became Caesar. Ino was therefore probably older than Tiberius, whom John describes as still being a beardless youth during the early years of Justin's reign<sup>(106)</sup>. For an empress to be turned down for an obscure twice-married middle-aged lady with the unsuitable name of Ino was truly intolerable.

When Justin appeared to be sinking he had rallied sufficiently to crown Tiberius Augustus<sup>(107)</sup>, so there should have been no difficulty when Justin eventually died. Tiberius had the position of Augustus already and no further ceremonies were called for. Yet a passage in Gregory of Tours, certainly of Greek origin and with the ring of authenticity, implicates Sophia in some kind of plot against Tiberius<sup>(108)</sup>. The emperor had been preparing to go to the hippodrome, according to custom at an Imperial accession, but was notified of a plot against him in favour of Justin's grandnephew, Justinian. Accordingly he changed direction and went to St. Sophia, summoned the patriarch and returned to the palace where in the presence of the high officials of the state he assumed the diadem and the purple and took his seat on the Imperial throne. The plot collap-

(103) THEOPHANES, p. 250.

(104) Cf. *HE* III. 22, a disavowal of partisanship combined with lavish praise of Tiberius's gentle character.

(105) *JOH. EPH.*, *HE* III. 8.

(106) *HE* III. 22. This is hardly literally true, however, for he was already count of the excubitors when Justin came to the throne — *COR., Iust.* I. 212 f.

(107) *JOH. EPH.*, *HE* III. 6; THEOPHANES, p. 248 f.

(108) *HF* V. 30 (= PAULUS DIACONUS, *HL* III. 11). Cf. the related story in *JOH. EPH.*, *HE* III. 13.

sed completely and soon afterwards Justinian was to try to buy his forgiveness from Tiberius. Gregory does not directly accuse Sophia of involvement in this affair, but he goes on to implicate her in further plots in favour of Justinian. She is said to have tried to invest Justinian with the purple while Tiberius was away at the grape harvest; Tiberius was again informed, returned at once to the city and caught Sophia. Now she was deprived of all her property and left only a small allowance. She, not Justinian, was held responsible; Justinian in fact was shown great mercy and even honour by the emperor. John of Ephesus does not record these stories, but confirms Sophia's plots against Tiberius and her deprivation of property. This he sees as a punishment for her impious and unjust behaviour and for her arrogance in not seeing Justin's madness as a punishment from God for the persecution of Monophysites<sup>(109)</sup>. John sets the events in the context of divine wrath falling on persecutors, but presents them also as a punishment for the sin of pride; Sophia, who had said that she would never allow another woman to take her place<sup>(110)</sup>, was herself stripped of her possessions and set aside.

Her pride and her resentment against Tiberius had carried her too far. Even so she had the most generous possible treatment from the emperor. After Justin's death he had invited her to continue to live in the palace, and she did so even after the plots had been discovered and after Tiberius had found out that she had been secretly removing Imperial gold from the palace to her own house<sup>(111)</sup>. It must have been a bitter moment when Tiberius invited her to consider herself as his mother<sup>(112)</sup>. As John puts it, she was full of grief and lamentation to think that in her lifetime she had become as one dead. And Tiberius was in fact making a virtue out of necessity; for the truth was that Sophia had refused to move out of the palace. So awkward was the situation for Tiberius and his family that he was forced to rebuild part of the palace so as to provide a home for himself and his wife and children<sup>(113)</sup>. At this moment came a dispute with Sophia as

(109) *HE* III. 10.

(110) See above.

(111) *JOH. EPH.*, *HE* III. 10.

(112) *Ibid.*

(113) *JOH. EPH.*, *HE* III. 23.

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to an unfinished pillar begun by Justin in the baths of Zeuxippus. Sophia demanded that Tiberius should finish it but in an act of unaccustomed but entirely justifiable irritation he had it taken down and used the stones in the building of his own quarters in the palace<sup>(114)</sup>. By whatever measures Tiberius was able in the end to eject Sophia from the Imperial palace and she was established in the palace of Sophiae where she and Justin had lived earlier<sup>(115)</sup>, in virtual custody.

#### IV. THE FINAL STAGE

Even now Sophia's role in public affairs was not over. Tiberius was not to survive for long, and when in 582 he felt himself failing he sent for Sophia to ask her advice on the choice of a successor<sup>(116)</sup>. She recommended Maurice, a successful general, still unmarried. Gregory tells us that now as before she hoped to marry the new Augustus herself. Whether this is true, or simply a suspicious guess or a doublet of her earlier plans for Tiberius, she did not succeed. Tiberius had an eligible daughter of his own to offer, and Maurice was duly crowned Augustus and married to Constantina<sup>(117)</sup>.

With that Sophia was finally eclipsed. Constantina soon bore a son, the only heir born in the purple since Theodosius II, while Maurice brought his family to Constantinople, and gave them high positions<sup>(118)</sup>. A new Imperial family was in control and there was no place for Sophia. Yet the last reference we have to her shows her as late as the end of Maurice's reign<sup>(119)</sup> joining with the Empress Constantina in making an Easter present of a *στέμμα* to Maurice<sup>(120)</sup>. Even this is a curious story, for Theophanes records that Maurice

(114) *Ibid.*, III. 24.

(115) THEOPHANES, p. 250, but wrongly dating the building of the palace of Sophiae, for which see *Byzantion* 37 (1967), 14.

(116) GREG. TUR., *HF* VI. 30 (= PAULUS DIACONUS, *HL* II. 15).

(117) GREG. TUR., *loc. cit.*; JOH. EPH., *HE* V. 13; THEOPHYLACT I. 10; THEOPHANES, p. 252.

(118) JOH. EPH., *HE* V. 18.

(119) The episode is dated to 600.

(120) THEOPHANES, p. 281; cf. J. EBERSOLT, *Les Arts somptuaires de Byzance* (Paris, 1923), 32.

hung it in St. Sophia above the altar, thereby for some reason deeply offending both empresses and causing Constantina to be angry with him for the whole day of the festival.

So Sophia had not outlived her own importance, even at the close of the century. For forty years she had been a dominant influence in politics. During the reign of Justin she exercised a power no less than the emperor's and almost succeeded in making the Imperial power into a collegiality. Once Justin's illness had set in she came into her own at the moment of transfer — in Tiberius's appointment as Caesar above all. But she seriously underestimated Tiberius when the time came for him to succeed as Augustus, threw in her lot in desperation with plotters and was eventually discomfited, only to be consulted again at Tiberius's own death. Sophia lived on, possibly even to see Phocas murder Maurice and his family. She had been one of the most colourful of empresses and far outstripped in real power the more notorious career of her short lived aunt Theodora.

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## THE ARTISTIC PATRONAGE OF JUSTIN II (1)

Justin II (AD 565-578) had no Procopius to panegyrisé his buildings – indeed, at least in his later years, he received a very bad press (2). For John of Ephesus, who knew the emperor well, his many building schemes were but signs of folly, fit for doggerel inscriptions and doomed to be left unfinished or torn down by the mad emperor's virtuous successor (3). Nor does much survive from the official art of this reign. Even the few objects that have been assigned to this period have been the subjects of sharp debate: the reign has even been seen as a time of so serious a decline that one cannot conceive of major works of high quality being produced (4). At the same time these years seem to mark a turning point in imperial ideology, manifested in official art as well as in other aspects of court life and imperial activity (5). It is particularly unfortunate, then, that so little datable work has survived to help in

(1) Earlier versions of this paper were presented in a joint communication with Dr. Robin Cormack at the *Colloquium on Justinian and the Sixth Century* held at the University of Nottingham in July 1977, and separately at the meeting of the College Art Association held in New York, January 1978. I am very grateful to Robin Cormack for valuable criticisms and suggestions.

(2) See Averil CAMERON, 'Early Byzantine *Kaiserkritik*: Two Case Histories', *BMGS*, 3 (1977), pp. 1-17.

(3) John of Ephesus, *HE*, III, 24, also quoted in C. MANGO, *The Art of the Byzantine Empire, 312-1453* (Englewood Cliffs, 1972), p. 125 (an extremely useful collection of source material in translation).

(4) David WRIGHT, 'The Shape of the Seventh Century in Byzantine Art', in *Abstracts, First Annual Byzantine Studies Conference*, Cleveland (1975), pp. 12 ('marked decline' in the period of Justin II), 24 ('grave decline', c. 580) and cf. pp. 25, 28.

(5) A. GRABAR, *L'Empereur dans l'art byzantin* (Paris, 1936), pp. 18 f., 24 f.; E. KITZINGER, 'The Cult of Icons in the Period before Iconoclasm', *DOP*, 8 (1954), p. 125 f.; J. D. BRECKENRIDGE, *The Numismatic Iconography of Justinian II* (New York, 1959), p. 53; I. LAVIN, 'The House of the Lord', *Art Bulletin*, 44 (1962), p. 23; Averil CAMERON, 'Images of Authority. Elites, Icons and Cultural Change in late sixth-century Byzantium', *Past and Present*, 84 (1979), pp. 3-35.

delineating this change more precisely. Yet we do have a surprising amount of literary evidence for works now lost, which, if critically presented, will reveal Justin II as a considerable artistic patron. In a perceptive remark which has never been followed up with the systematic treatment that it deserved, David Talbot-Rice observed that Justin II was no less a patron than Justinian (6). Now in view of the emperor's own complaints about the state of the economy on his accession (he was forced to deal with a financial crisis by paying off Justinian's debts out of his own pocket) (7), it is remarkable to find him commissioning art works and buildings on a large scale, and the evidence is therefore worth setting out and examining, the more so since it provides an unusually substantive context for the surviving works in a period where the objects are few and stylistic judgements correspondingly difficult and controversial (8).

My intention in this note is to set out the literary evidence for Justin's own direct patronage, of architecture, sculpture and, where evidence exists, smaller objects, and for other works of this period which are either associated with him or are more or less official in character. Some of these works, and some others not mentioned in literary texts but either certainly or probably of this reign, have given rise to a great deal of discussion, and have been the basis of wide-ranging judgements about Byzantine culture in the late sixth century, especially in relation to the contemporary growth in the cult of icons and to the whole question of the survival or decline of classicising style and technique. But often these discussions – which tend to take as their starting point the evaluation of surviving objects – could be greatly enriched by a due consideration of the unusually extensive literary material relating to the artistic output of this reign. In particular, now that the value of Corippus as a source not only for imperial ceremony but also for art history, iconography and the interpretation of themes and motifs used in visual art is beginning to

(6) *The Beginnings of Christian Art* (London, 1957), pp. 95-96.

(7) CORIPPUS, *Iust.*, II, 261 f., 361 ff.; Justin, Nov., 148 (a. 566).

(8) For overall surveys see E. KITZINGER, 'Byzantine Art in the Period before Iconoclasm', *Berichte zum XI. Internationalen Byzantinisten-Kongress* (Münster, 1958); K. WEITZMANN, 'The Classical Heritage in the Art of Constantinople', *Studies in Classical and Byzantine MSS. Illumination* (Chicago, 1971), pp. 126 ff.; and see too KITZINGER, *Byzantine Art in the Making* (Cambridge, Mass., 1977).



be fully appreciated<sup>(9)</sup>, it is necessary to survey the other literary texts again too. One of the lessons of Corippus's panegyric is that the idea of a strict separation of religious and imperial art, whether in terms of style or perhaps even of subject matter can no longer be maintained, and this realisation in itself must affect our judgements for example of the very varied types of silverware which belong to this reign or to the late sixth century and which have often been at the centre of conflicting stylistic opinions among modern scholars<sup>(10)</sup>. It is outside the scope of the present paper to discuss the interpretation of this silverware, or indeed the art historical aspects of the other surviving works that I shall mention. But the literary evidence here presented should, I hope, at least give a fuller context to period as a whole.

But the study of Justin's reign from this point of view can bring other advantages too. It may be possible to fill in in rather more detail our existing impression of Constantinople and its topography in the late sixth century, and possibly to discern some kind of pattern or policy in Justin's building programme, for which we have the most evidence. And this study can act as a test case for the handling of the various kinds of source material available, especially the entries of the chroniclers and the patriographers on which we must chiefly (and often exclusively) depend. But we should begin with what look like authentic and reliable remarks about Justin in the works of contemporary authors.

It must first be noted that the primary sources for Justin II are extremely biased. On the one hand Corippus was writing an official panegyric, and naturally exalts Justin both as an individual and as the principal actor in the imperial scenario. Thus he drags in a hardly relevant compliment to the recently built Sophianae palace (built, or at least begun, before Justin's accession)<sup>(11)</sup>, and almost

(9) See n. 11 below.

(10) For which see E. CRUIKSHANK DODD, *Byzantine Silver Stamps* (Washington, D.C., 1961), pp. 95 ff.; *Byzantine Silver Treasures* (Abegg-Stiftung, Bern, 1973), pp. 17 ff., 34 ff.; and discussion in e.g. J. BECKWITH, *The Art of Constantinople*, 2nd ed. (London, 1958), p. 49 f. and works cited in n. 8.

(11) *Iust.*, IV, 286 *Sophianarum splendentia tecta novarum*. For Corippus see Averil CAMERON (ed.), *Flavius Crescens Corippus, In laudem Iustini Augusti minoris libri IV* (London, 1976), and for the Sophianae, 'Notes on the Sophiae, the Sophianae and the Harbour of Sophia', *Byzantion*, 37 (1967), pp. 15 ff.

contrives to give Justin the credit for Hagia Sophia in the course of an elaborate play on the name of the church and the name of the new Empress Sophia, Justin's wife<sup>(12)</sup>. Justin's piety is one of Corippus's chief themes<sup>(13)</sup>, though it would be hasty, perhaps, as we shall see, to use his panegyric as evidence of the emperor's real religious stance, for piety was after all built in to the imperial *persona*. And we must remember, too, that Corippus was writing in the first year of Justin's reign, when there was as yet little of substance to report, so that of necessity he has recourse to panegyric *topoi*. The church historians Evagrius and John of Ephesus, the latter imprisoned during Justin's later persecution of Monophysites, have a very different story to tell. For personal and partisan reasons, both writers condemn Justin not only as mad (true enough), but also as grasping and rapacious – stock accusations from the repertoire of imperial invective as Corippus's praises were from imperial panegyric<sup>(14)</sup>. Evagrius, as an orthodox church historian, was on the same side as Justin in religious matters, but is so bitterly opposed to him on political grounds that he does not even acknowledge his piety – and he is not interested in artistic patronage. John's *Ecclesiastical History*, on the other hand, being much fuller, introduces references to Justin's building activities, but takes such a violently hostile view of the emperor based on the author's experiences as a persecuted Monophysite that the artistic projects too are fitted into the general framework of condemnation, and appear as evidence of Justin's folly, or later, his actual madness. Thus when his pharos is torn down, John takes this as proof of the wrath of heaven falling on one who has 'used his royal power for things excessive and alien to all piety'<sup>(15)</sup>. John's evidence, though his *History* is in many ways our best source for the period, has to be treated with care, for there are several different kinds of bias operating in it. Hostility to the patriarch John Scholasticus, a main

(12) *Iust.*, IV, 264 ff.; cf. I, 280 *rem Sophia dignam certo sapientia fecit*. For the latter part of this passage (lines 293 ff.) see TABAR, *op. cit.* (n. 5), p. 105.

(13) *Op. cit.* (n. 11), intro., p. 8 and *passim*.

(14) *Art. cit.* (n. 2). See especially EVAGRIUS, *HE*, V, 1-2, 5, 11, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100.

EPHESUS, *HE*, III, 2 f.

(15) III, 2, 24.



supporter of Justin, is for example a relatively simple motif<sup>(16)</sup>; his partiality on the other hand for Justin's successor Tiberius (which he shares with Evagrius) is sometimes mingled with criticism of his prodigality, implying by comparison a favourable judgement on Justin II<sup>(17)</sup>. Yet these contemporary sources, if properly understood, will best help us to interpret the evidence of the later chroniclers and the *Patria*. For Theophanes, for example, Justin II is a builder. Yet if we look closer we see that all the works singled out are ecclesiastical. When, therefore, Theophanes describes Justin as 'pious' and 'very orthodox'<sup>(18)</sup>, it is probably fair to regard these remarks as little more than a deduction from the ecclesiastical activity which Theophanes has described, and to be suspicious of the assumption that Justin's patronage fell exclusively, or even mainly, in this field<sup>(19)</sup>. The same remarks were repeated centuries later by Zonaras, but Zonaras had other sources for Justin's buildings and knew of some secular works too, so that his remarks about Justin's orthodoxy might at first sight seem to merit more credence, were it not that they clearly derive purely from Theophanes<sup>(20)</sup>. And finally, we have to be suspicious too of Mesarites, who in his description of the Holy Apostles church calls Justin 'a man celebrated for his justice and greatly renowned for his piety', for

(16) *HE*, I, 11, II, 25 f. (his punishment for his persecution of Monophysites).

(17) Partiality for Tiberius – *HE*, III, 22; cf. EVAGRIUS, *HE*, V, 13, Cor., *Hist.*, I, 212 f., IV, 374 f. Tiberius's prodigality – JOHN OF EPHEBUS, *HE*, III, 11. See too AVERIL CAMERON, 'The Empress Sophia', *Byzantion*, 45 (1975), pp. 5-21.

(18) Pp. 241-42 de Boor. Theophanes also describes Justin as φιλοκτίστης.

(19) I owe this observation to Robin Cormack. The point is that though Theophanes does mention secular buildings of Justin (pp. 243-4), he makes the remarks about orthodoxy solely in the context of his churches.

(20) ZONARAS, XIV, 10. Besides Theophanes's churches Zonaras mentions the aqueduct of Valens and the Chrysotriklinos and 'many other buildings', including the harbour of Sophia and the Sophianae palace. CEDRENIUS too (from the same source) calls Justin 'orthodox' (I, p. 685). It is probably for the same reason that Cedrenus (following George MONACHUS, II, 655-56 de Boor) wrongly attaches to Justin II the story of the Jewish boy and the Eucharist (I, pp. 686-7), which is told by Evagrius (*HE*, IV, 36) in the context of Justinian, where it clearly belongs because of its mention of the patriarch Menas; the story is out of place in Cedrenus's narrative, and it has become attached to Justin II because of his now-famous 'piety', for when Cedrenus introduces it he tacks it on with the words that it happened in the reign of the same very pious emperor (I, p. 686).

there is even confusion here (as is not uncommon elsewhere) between Justin and Justinian<sup>(21)</sup>.

The judgements, therefore, as distinct from the objective statements, made in these authors may be misleading. Contemporaries would naturally tend to praise an emperor's piety, while later authors might focus on his ecclesiastical works for other reasons. On the other hand, emperors themselves were bound at this period to engage in activities which seem proof of their own personal commitment. Thus when Justin and Sophia sent a relic of the True Cross to Poitiers in answer to a request for a relic from the abbess Radegund, Venantius Fortunatus wrote a poem of thanks in which the chief theme is Justin's piety and orthodoxy<sup>(22)</sup>. Justin's motivation on sending to Rome the cross now in the Vatican which bears the busts of Justin and Sophia flanking the Lamb of God<sup>(23)</sup>, can easily be misrepresented, especially as this reign seems to provide a context in the shape of a distinctive move towards imperial patronage of icons in which the personal role of the emperor and empress appears crucial<sup>(24)</sup>. It is more realistic to interpret at least such actions as the sending of the Vatican Cross

(21) G. DOWNEY (ed.), *Nikolaus Mesarites: Description of the Church of the Holy Apostles at Constantinople*, Trans. Am. Philosoph. Soc., 47 (1957), c. 40.5, referring to the tomb of 'Justinus, the grandson (sic) of Justinian, a man celebrated for his justice and greatly renowned for his piety, who also built what was lacking in the great shrine of the Wisdom of the Logos of God, and completed it and resettled the dome, which had fallen, and skilfully raised it'. Downey, *ad loc.* tries to defend Mesarites by arguing that the collapse of the dome to which he refers could have been the one which took place in the second year of Tiberius II, but see below, p. 79. I prefer to think that Mesarites has confused Justin and Justinian.

(22) App. carm. 2, *Ad Iustinum et Sophiam Augustos*; see *Studies in Church History*, 13 (1976), pp. 51-67. For the surviving reliquary, which many scholars believe to be of the eleventh century, see Sir M. CONWAY, 'St. Radegund's Reliquary at Poitiers', *Antiquaries' Journal*, 3 (1923), pp. 1-12; E. MALE, *Le Fin de paganisme en Gaule et les plus anciennes basiliques chrétiennes* (Paris, 1950), pp. 294-5.

(23) Parts of the surviving cross are again probably of later date; see C. BELTING-IHM, 'Das Justinus Kreuz in der Schatzkammer der Peterskirche zu Rom', *Jhb. des römisch-germanischen Zentralmuseums Mainz*, XII (1965), pp. 1-24, for an authoritative survey. A second part to this study is expected.

(24) See especially KITZINGER, *art. cit.* (n. 5), p. 126 f., and below, p. 83.



and the Poitiers reliquary in terms of Justin's attempts to reassert orthodoxy especially in his early years. Sponsored by the ultra-orthodox John Scholasticus, devotee of the orthodox stylite St. Simeon the Younger, Justin's first action was to interpose the Creed of Constantinople in the liturgy, and he very quickly set about trying to bring about a union of Monophysites and Chalcedonians through successive meetings and an 'edict of union': it was only when this failed that he turned to the violent persecution that characterised his later years<sup>(25)</sup>. We must then consider the whole range of evidence for Justin's patronage, and set it against the context of his reign and policies in general, rather than accept at face value the statements of the chroniclers. For this reason I shall leave Justin's ecclesiastical patronage till later, until we have seen what he did in the secular field. It will then be possible to look more critically at the evidence for his 'piety' as shown in his patronage.

Most of our evidence concerns statuary and buildings (almost all now lost) and here again we owe this bias to the kinds of sources in existence. On the one hand a significant number of contemporary epigrams, many included in the *Cycle* of the poet and historian Agathias who wrote his *History* under Justin II and seems to have put together his collection of epigrams then too<sup>(26)</sup>, commemorate statues and buildings from this reign that would not otherwise be known. We can hardly doubt this evidence, especially as some at least of these works fell into the category of imperial patronage, or were put up as part of the expected duties of the officials whose names the epigrams record. On the other hand, many such works are ascribed to Justin II by the patriographers, and this constitutes

(25) For Justin's policies see Averil CAMERON, 'The early religious policies of Justin II', *Studies in Church History*, 13 (1976), pp. 51-67; A. DE HALLEUX, 'Trois synodes impériaux du VI<sup>e</sup> siècle dans une chronique syriaque inédite', in R. H. FISCHER (ed.), *A Tribute to Arthur Voobius* (Chicago, 1977), pp. 302 ff.; E. HONIGMANN, *Évêques et évêchés monophysites d'Asie antérieure au VI<sup>e</sup> siècle* (Louvain, 1951), pp. 220 ff.

(26) See Averil and Alan CAMERON, 'The Cycle of Agathias', *JHS*, 86 (1966), pp. 6-25, accepted by R. C. McCail, *ibid.*, 89 (1969), pp. 87-96. In arguing again that Agathias's preface (*AP*, IV, 3) was addressed to Justinian, Barry BALDWIN ('Four Problems in Agathias', *BZ*, 70 [1977], pp. 295-305) fails to take into account the poems in the *Cycle* clearly addressed to Justin II and Sophia. For the composition of Agathias's *History* see Averil CAMERON, *Agathias* (Oxford, 1970), p. 9 f.

evidence of a very different order. As anyone knows who has attempted to work on Constantinopolitan topography, or to decide which art works actually adorned the city at different periods, the topographical texts<sup>(27)</sup> are frequently contradictory even when they do not constitute the only evidence for a work now lost. The sources used by the authors of these works, and their motivation for writing, remain largely mysterious, and their individual notices must therefore be approached with extreme caution. And finally, while the chroniclers, especially Theophanes and Cedrenus, sometimes preserve extra information, they can be equally unreliable, especially in their dating, and by no means always deserve the degree of credence which they are often given<sup>(28)</sup>.

Even given these caveats about the source material, Justin is credited with a surprisingly large number of statues, all the more striking and at first sight perhaps suspicious, in view of the paucity of surviving examples from Constantinople in the sixth century<sup>(29)</sup>. Yet we know that imperial statues were still being made in the eighth century, and the bunching of allusions in the patriographers to works dating from the reigns of Justin II, Tiberius II and Maurice suggests both a good original source for this period and a considerable amount of work being produced at that time<sup>(30)</sup>. If we

(27) By which I mean the *Parastaseis Syntomai Chronikai* (8th c.), edited by Th. Preger, *Scriptores Originum Constantinopolitanarum* (Leipzig, 1901), I, and the so-called *Patria* (10th c.), *ibid.*, II. A new translation and notes on the *Parastaseis* is in preparation. Two works by Cyril Mango offer the best introduction so far to the critical use of these texts (*The Brazen House*, Copenhagen, 1959; 'Antique Statuary and the Byzantine Beholder', *DOP*, 17 (1963), pp. 55-75, esp. p. 60. The basic guides to the topography of Constantinople, both by R. Janin, unfortunately have to be used with caution (*Constantinople Byzantine*, 2nd ed. [Paris, 1964]; *La Géographie ecclésiastique de l'empire byzantin III.1: Les églises et les monastères*, 2nd ed. [Paris, 1969]).

(28) Recently demonstrated for Theophanes by Cyril MANGO, *BMGS*, 4 (1978), pp. 19 ff., and see too *art. cit.* (n. 11).

(29) See for example, E. ALFOIDI-ROSENBAUM, 'Portrait of a Young Lady of the Time of Justinian', *Metropolitan Museum Journal*, 1 (1968), pp. 19-40, esp. 31 f. Even if many of the statues ascribed to Justin's reign were reused in later examples, their number is still remarkable.

(30) MANGO, *Brazen House*, p. 102, comments on the high representation of sixth-century emperors on the facade of the Chalce, and suspects a source dating from c. 600.

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take into account the allusions to lost works in the epigrams and the patriographers, it is clear that Justin II made his mark on the city as forcefully as any other emperor, if not more so. To Justinian had fallen the task – and the opportunity – of rebuilding the heart of the capital after the destruction caused by the Nika revolt, so that his successor had less chance to commemorate his reign with major public buildings in the centre of the city. But we shall see that imperial statues constituted one way in which the problem was tackled.

Thus a group of statuary on pillars at the harbour of Sophia (for which see below) represented Justin, his wife Sophia, his daughter Arabia and Narses the *praepositus* (31); erected by Narses, friend and minister of Justin, this group may nevertheless be regarded as 'official', and matched in any case the group on the Milion – a showpiece in a central urban position – of Sophia, Arabia and Helena, Sophia's niece (32). Since a variant version of the first group substitutes Justin's mother, Vigilantia, for Narses (33), it is hard to be certain what actually stood there, but that there was at least one (and more probably two) large and ambitious group of members of the imperial family is sure at any rate. The main buildings of Constantinople were adorned with a mixture of antique and imperial statues, so that the placing of Justin's works is important, and it is clear that their sites were carefully chosen for maximum impact. The city itself erected a great statue of Justin himself wearing consular dress, with an inscription asserting the official interpretation of Justin's bold move in restoring the consulship in AD 566 (34). Like the rest of the statuary mentioned in this section, this has perished and its locality is unknown, but it must have made

(31) *Patria* (n. 27), II, p. 230. 20. Narses: here called *patricius* and *praepositus* (p. 230. 8); see R. GUILLAND, *REB.* 13 (1955), p. 65 f.; E. STEIN, *Studien zur Geschichte des byzantinischen Reiches, vornehmlich unter den Kaisern Justinus II und Tiberius Constantinus* (Stuttgart, 1919), pp. 53, 112 f., 116; CAMERON, *op. cit.* (n. 11), p. 189. He is eulogised by CORIPPUS, *Iust.*, III, 221 f.; IV, 368 f.

(32) PREGER, I, p. 38. 10; II, p. 166, and see MANGO, *Brazen House*, p. 47 f.

(33) PREGER, II, p. 184. 14. Vigilantia, the sister of Justinian – Vict. Tonn., a. 567; CORIPPUS, *Iust.*, pref., 21; I, 55; II, 192.

(34) *Anth. Plan.*, 72. See Averil and Alan CAMERON, 'Anth. Plan., 72: a propaganda poem from the reign of Justin II', *BICS*, 13 (1966), pp. 101–104. Cf. CORIPPUS, *Iust.*, II, 333–60.

a great impression on contemporaries, and goes a long way towards showing that the revival of consular iconography usually attributed to Tiberius II and Maurice is most likely to have begun with Justin II himself (35). Again, city-prefects were expected to glorify their patrons: accordingly Domninus erected statues of Justin and Sophia in front of the Praetorium, while Julian put up statues of the two at the entrance to the Zeuxippus (36). An anonymous epigram commemorates gold statues of Justin and Sophia set up from the spoils of victory over the Persians (37), while John of Ephesus tells of magnificent bronze statues of Justin and Sophia set up by the emperor on the site of one of his new palaces – though he adds that the wrath of God manifested itself, sending a gust of wind which overturned them and cast them head first into the ground (38). It is not easy to be absolutely certain of the number or the location of these imperial statues of Justin II and Sophia, but these references in the texts, even though the works themselves are lost, do completely cohere with the impression given by Justin and Sophia in other ways – on their coinage, for instance – of a degree of arrogance and imperial hauteur which Justin at least was perfectly able to reconcile with a show of conspicuous piety (39). We can see, too, that even if

(35) *Op. cit.* (n. 11), pp. 197–98, and for the concept of *renovatio* of fourth-century themes under Tiberius II and Maurice, see A. GRABAR, *L'Iconoclasme byzantin* (Paris, 1957), pp. 27 ff. Further, below, p. 80 f.

(36) *AP*, OIX, 658–9, 803–4: 812–3. For Julian, and for these statues, see Alan CAMERON, 'Some Prefects called Julian', *Byzantion*, 47 (1977), pp. 42–64. MANGO, *Brazen House*, p. 102, n. 125, suspects that the imperial statues mentioned in *Parast.*, 81 (PREGER, I, p. 70) were of Justin and Sophia – rightly, but they are probably those set up by Julian, not the statue on a pillar mentioned by John of Ephesus, *HE*, III, 24 (MANGO, *loc. cit.*). The baths of Zeuxippus covered a large area near the palace (MANGO, *op. cit.*, pp. 37 ff.), and had been adorned with large quantities of antique statuary (see CHRISTODORUS'S *Ekphrasis*, *AP* II). Some, though probably not all, of this will have been destroyed in the Nika conflagration; but the baths seem to have been still in use in the mid-sixth century.

(37) *AP*, IX, 810.

(38) *HE*, III, 24; these were at the Deuteron palace (n. 42 below).

(39) Coins: n. 116 below; for Justin's 'megalomania', A. E. M. JOHNSON, *Roman Empire*, I (Oxford, 1964), p. 304 f.; cf. MENANDER PROTECTOR, fr. 14: Sophia's arrogance – see *art. cit.* (n. 15). Sophia was the first empress to appear on coins with her husband, and decrees were also sent out in both their names.



Justin II was not represented on the façade of the Chalce<sup>(40)</sup>, he certainly did leave statues of himself in equally prominent positions – and as we shall see, he made a vitally important contribution to the imperial palace of rather a different kind.

Let us turn from statues to buildings. Here Constantinople and its environs again received a lot of attention. Some of Justin's buildings were clearly private. For instance, the Sophianae palace, across the Bosphorus, under way at least at the time of his accession, and richly decorated with mosaics; this is the palace which Corippus introduced into his panegyric<sup>(41)</sup>. Another palace, the Deuteron, was built in the north-west suburb where Justin had lived as curopalates<sup>(42)</sup>; for this John of Ephesus says many houses were demolished, and also that Justin built there a hippodrome, 'extensive gardens and pleasure-grounds'<sup>(43)</sup>. A third palace was built on the island of Principo<sup>(44)</sup>, and the existing one at Hieria was refurbished<sup>(45)</sup>. Also before his accession Justin cleared the old harbour of Julian and constructed a new one called after Sophia, with a palace nearby called the Sophiae<sup>(46)</sup>. It was probably here – if we believe Corippus – that Justin heard the news of the death of Justinian<sup>(47)</sup>, for the poet attributes to the palace where he locates this scene a 'sun-room' (*heliakon*) strikingly like that which the patriographers attribute to the Sophiae palace at the harbour<sup>(48)</sup>. Contemporary epigrams testify to the horologion built by Justin at

(40) MANGO, *Brazen House*, p. 102, rather gives the impression that Justin was commemorated in this area of the city only by the statue mentioned at John of Ephesus, *HE*, III, 24, which was never completed.

(41) CORIPPUS, *Iust.*, IV, 287; *AP*, IX, 657; THEOPHANES, p. 243. Cf. *art. cit.* (n. 11).

(42) THEOPHANES, p. 243; MANGO, *Art of the Byzantine Empire*, p. 124.

(43) MANGO, *ibid.*

(44) THEOPHANES, p. 243.

(45) PREGER, II, p. 268, 6 f.

(46) PREGER, II, p. 229, 11 f.; CORIPPUS, *Iust.*, I, 97 f. with note *ad loc.*; *art. cit.* (n. 11).

(47) *Iust.*, I, 66-186.

(48) *Iust.*, I, 97 f.; PREGER, II, p. 230, 2 f. Though the Magnaura (adjoining the imperial palace) also had a *heliakon* (THEOPHANES, p. 274; *Parast.*, 74, PREGER, I, p. 68).

the Basilica (another prominent site)<sup>(49)</sup>, and we know too that he built a public bath at the Forum Tauri which he also named after his wife<sup>(50)</sup>. At the hot baths of Yalova, patronised by Justinian and Theodora, capitals have been found with the monograms of Justin and Sophia<sup>(51)</sup>. And there was too the great pharos which John of Ephesus tells us that Justin started to build in open land near the Zeuxippus<sup>(52)</sup>.

But other projects seem to show Justin more in his imperial role. For example, the restoration of the land walls of the city revealed in an inscription from the Mevlevihane gate<sup>(53)</sup>. A lost inscription of AD 564 located near the land walls recorded the tomb of Firmina, a granddaughter of Justin, presumably the daughter of Arabia, who died while Justin was still curopalates<sup>(54)</sup>. Surely it was as emperor however that Justin repaired the aqueduct of Valens<sup>(55)</sup>. He also appears in the sources as the initiator of works of imperial philanthropy – as builder of a leper-house called the Zoticon<sup>(56)</sup> and an orphanage of St. Paul, perhaps as well as the church of SS. Peter and Paul nearby<sup>(57)</sup>. The sources, especially the patriographers, are

(49) *AP*, IX, 779-80. The Basilica was decorated with major statuary of various periods (MANGO, *Brazen House*, p. 50; cf. *Parast.*, 37, PREGER, I, p. 39 f.).

(50) THEOPHANES, p. 243.

(51) ARIF MUFID MANSEL, 'Yalova und Umgebung', *Istanbul Müzeleri Nasrîyatı*, XIII (1936), p. 57.

(52) *HE*, III, 24.

(53) I. ŠEVČENKO, 'The Inscription of Justin II's Time on the Mevlevihane (Rhesion) Gate at Istanbul', *Recueil des travaux de l'Institut d'études byzantines (Belgrade)*, 12 (1970), pp. 1 ff.

(54) P. DETHIER, *Nouvelles découvertes archéologiques faites à Constantinople* (Constantinople, 1867), p. 3 f.; O. FIEBIGER, *Beiträge zur Geschichte der Deutschen Sprache und Literatur*, 42 (Halle, 1917), p. 331 f.

(55) CEDRENIUS, I, 685; ZONARAS, XIV, 10.

(56) PREGER, II, p. 235, 267. But the *Life* of St. Zoticus, cc. 11-12, attributes the leper-hospital to Constantius, and only the orphanage of St. Paul to Justin and Sophia (see M. AUBINEAU, 'Zoticos de Constantinople, nourricier des pauvres et serviteur des lépreux', *AB*, 93 (1975), pp. 67-108. See too D. J. CONSTANTELOS, *Byzantine Philanthropy and Social Welfare* (New Brunswick, 1968), pp. 164-65. One of the entries in the *Patria* (PREGER, II, p. 235, 267) suggests that in fact Justin and Sophia built a second hospital of the same name on the site.

(57) Orphanage: PREGER, II, p. 235; *Life* of Zoticus, c. 12 (AUBINEAU, *art. cit.* [n. 56], p. 82, cf. p. 97). But Theophanes, p. 244, says that Justin built a church of SS. Peter and Paul 'in the orphanage', i.e. that the orphanage already existed. I do



often at odds in detail (as here), so that one cannot always be sure of Justin's exact part, but his name appears regularly attached to certain buildings, and his patronage at any rate is undisputed. We also encounter Narses again in this category of building, founding a xenon and an old people's complex<sup>(58)</sup>, and it is worth remembering his closeness to Justin. Another of Justin's constructions in the city was the 'house of Adda', though this may in fact have been a church<sup>(59)</sup>.

But more interesting for us are two projects of which more is known – the new throne-room in the palace known as the Chrysotriklinos, and the rebuilt patriarchal palace. Both illustrate the political application of Justin's patronage. John of Ephesus tells us that the patriarch John Scholasticus rebuilt the patriarchal palace after it had been burnt down<sup>(60)</sup>. Now John Scholasticus had become patriarch only shortly before the death of Justinian. One of his first actions was to support and crown the new emperor, in fact he belonged to an inner group who clearly stage-managed the whole accession with the utmost skill, and were not above manipulating the usual inauguration ceremony to make sure that their candidate was safely crowned and acclaimed<sup>(61)</sup>. Like Justin, John was a special devotee of the stylite St. Symeon the Younger, who managed to involve himself in imperial politics while sitting on his pillar outside Antioch<sup>(62)</sup>. It seems very likely that the new patriarchal palace – which John proceeded to adorn with his own portraits and which became the centre of ecclesiastical politics in the capital<sup>(63)</sup> –

not think we can be as sure as Aubineau (p. 98) that Theophanes's testimony is automatically to be preferred.

(58) PREGER, II, p. 249; cf. THEOPHANES, p. 243. NARSES, the 'favourite of the Emperor Justin', built a 'house of Narses' and the monastery of the Cathars.

(59) Below, n. 76.

(60) HE, II, 34. See MANGO, *Brazen House*, p. 51 f.

(61) See P. VAN DEN VEN, 'L'Accession de Jean le Scholastique au siège patriarcal de Constantinople en 565', *Byzantion*, 35 (1965), pp. 320 ff.; see too 'Les Écrits de S. Syméon Stylite le Jeune avec trois sermons inédits', *Le Muséon*, 70 (1957), pp. 1 ff. Other supporters of Justin were Anastasius the *quaestor* and Callinicus the *praepositus*.

(62) VAN DEN VEN, *op. cit.* (n. 61) and see *Vita S. Symeonis Iunioris*, ed. P. van den Ven, *Subsidia Hagiographica*, 32.1 (Brussels, 1962), especially chap. 202 f.

(63) The palace was used as a prison during the persecution of Monophysites – John of Ephesus, HE, I, 14, 15, 17; II, 7, etc. John of Ephesus was imprisoned

was Justin's *quid pro quo*. If so, he was not disappointed, for John later became one of his chief allies in the persecution of Monophysites, and thus earned the lasting condemnation of John of Ephesus<sup>(64)</sup>. The palace covered a considerable area between St. Sophia and the Augusteum<sup>(65)</sup>, and included the room with figural mosaics over the SW ramp in St. Sophia<sup>(66)</sup>. The dating of these mosaics partly depends on the minute analysis of style and brickwork, but at least it can be said without controversy on the basis of the evidence so far considered that the literary evidence for Justin's reign would entirely support their attribution to this period. It is in any case indisputable from the literary texts that the extensive and clearly elaborate patriarchal palace dated in its restored form from this reign, and this in itself constitutes a conspicuous piece of official (surely imperially sponsored) building in the very heart of the city, with political implications for the strength of the patriarchate at this period. These considerations make the dispute over the precise dating of the figural mosaics seem much less crucial. But at least we have seen enough evidence of artistic production from this reign already to counter the assumption that it was a time of decline when major works either classical or religious are inconceivable<sup>(67)</sup>. Thus while there may perhaps be room for disagreement with the dating of the famous Great Palace mosaics to this period<sup>(68)</sup>, it should not be opposed on the subjective grounds that at this time 'so extraordinary a monument as this mosaic would be entirely isolated'<sup>(69)</sup>. The literary sources, and the evidence of lost

there twice himself). Patriarchal portraits: *ibid.*, I, 36; II, 34; and see Marlia MUNDALL, 'Monophysite Church Decoration', in A. A. BRYER and J. HERRIN (eds.), *Iconoclasm* (Birmingham, 1977), p. 72.

(64) See especially HE, I, 11, 38; II, 7, 25.

(65) See MANGO, *Brazen House*, p. 52.

(66) Robin CORMACK and E. J. W. HAWKINS, 'The Mosaics of St. Sophia at Istanbul: the Rooms above the Southwest Vestibule and Ramp', *DOP*, 31 (1977), pp. 177-251; *contra*, David WRIGHT, *art. cit.* (n. 4), p. 25.

(67) WRIGHT, *art. cit.* (n. 4), pp. 12, 24.

(68) MANGO, *Art Bulletin*, 42 (1960), p. 67 f.; the pottery finds in any case rule out a date earlier than c. 540 – J. W. HAYES, *Roman Pottery* (London, 1972), p. 418 – but Kitzinger would put it much later than Tiberius I on other grounds (see his discussion in *Byzantine Art in the Making*, p. 112 with n. 1).

(69) WRIGHT, *art. cit.*, p. 24.



art works, cannot of course tell us about style, but they can and do give us a sense of considerable and very varied output.

With this in mind let us consider the Chrysotriklinos, a crucially important ceremonial building in the imperial palace. The texts attribute its conception and most, if not all, of its construction to Justin II<sup>(70)</sup>. While it is hardly possible to be sure which parts Tiberius II completed, and perhaps makes little difference anyway, especially as Tiberius effectively ruled (with the Empress Sophia) from AD 574 while Justin was ill, we can at least bear in mind that it makes excellent sense if Justin II, who had a keen sense of the ideological value of ceremonial, who was arguably conscious of the advantage to himself in sponsoring newly fashionable religious movements, who was projecting himself as the image of Christ on earth, initiated the construction and design of a new setting for imperial ceremonial whose closest architectural relations were with ecclesiastical buildings, and which was decorated with scenes from the life of Christ, above all which had over the imperial throne the image of Christ Himself<sup>(71)</sup>. This room was to become one of the main settings for imperial ceremony, and to provide the scenery against which the emperor acted more and more as the participant in a religious ritual. Not surprisingly, one of the most prominent, indeed the climactic theme in Corippus's panegyric of Justin II is the idea of the emperor as imitating Christ<sup>(72)</sup>. In the new Chrysotriklinos this relationship of imitation, of microcosm and macrocosm, was given a truly visual expression.

In the imperial palace, then, Justin inspired, and probably himself provided, an addition which emphasised the closeness of the links between emperor and church. Perhaps it was not surprising that Theophanes picked out Justin's church patronage for special comment. His new foundations included the Chrysokeras

(70) Leo GRAMM., pp. 132, 137-8; ZONARAS, XIV. 10; *Suda*, s.v. Ioustinos. See especially LAVIN, *art. cit.* (n. 5), p. 22 f.; BRECKENRIDGE, *op. cit.* (*ibid.*), p. 54 f.; CAMERON, 'Images of Authority' (n. 5), p. 17 f.

(71) The ninth-century decoration was based on the original pre-Iconoclastic scheme – see AP, I. 106 and S. DER NERSESSIAN, 'Le Décor des églises du IX<sup>e</sup> siècle', *Actes du VI<sup>e</sup> Congrès International d'Études Byzantines*, II (Paris, 1951), pp. 315 ff. KITZINGER, *art. cit.* (n. 5), p. 126, claims the credit for Tiberius II.

(72) Especially at *Iust.*, II. 425 f., cf. 212.

beyond the Bosphorus: the churches of the Anargyroi ἐν τοῖς Δαρείου and εἰς τὰ Βασιλίσκου, SS. Peter and Paul, and the church of the Holy Apostles at the Triconch, rebuilt on the site of a church burnt down under Zeno<sup>(73)</sup>. He is also said to have built a church of the Virgin at Protasium and refurbished and decorated another begun by Constantine, renaming it after St. Thecla<sup>(74)</sup>. Further, a church of St. James containing many relics – the remains of the Holy Infants and of St. Simeon and the prophet Zachariah and of James the brother of Jesus<sup>(75)</sup>. And, apparently, a church of St. Michael<sup>(76)</sup>. But again Justin showed his awareness of the possibilities of patronage by undertaking work in each of four great existing churches, where the hand of the emperor would be most noticeable and its influence most crucial. The cult of the Virgin in Constantinople had been steadily growing, and under Justin II took a vital step forward when the emperor initiated restoration work in the two great churches of the Virgin in the city, which housed her main relics – her robe and girdle, soon to become the central palladia of Constantinople<sup>(77)</sup>. The sources are again contradictory when it comes to the church of the Virgin at Chalkoprateia, near

(73) Chrysokeras – PREGER, III. 164, p. 267; see JANIN, *Constantinople byzantine*<sup>2</sup>, 485. Anargyroi – THEOPHANES, p. 243; PREGER, III. 123, p. 255; ZONARAS, XIV. 10; AP, I. 11; the two churches of the Anargyroi are identified by JANIN, *Églises et monastères*<sup>2</sup>, pp. 284-5. SS. Peter and Paul – THEOPHANES, p. 244 (see n. 57); Triconch – *ibid.*, and see JANIN, *Const. Byz.*<sup>2</sup>, pp. 436-7.

(74) PREGER, II, pp. 220, 229; JANIN, *Églises et monastères*<sup>2</sup>, pp. 229, 191.

(75) PREGER, II, p. 263. See below, n. 86; JANIN, *Églises et monastères*<sup>2</sup>, p. 253.

(76) There is some confusion here. Both the *Patria* (PREGER, II, p. 229, 6 f.) and CEDRENIUS (II, p. 685) say that this was a church of St. Michael which derived its name from the house of a certain Addas nearby. But the 'house of Adda' seems a very unlikely name for a church; perhaps the building was itself a palace. The *Patria* further say (*loc. cit.*) that this church was previously the church of St. Thomas τοῦ Ἀμαντίου, whereas in the synaxaria the churches of St. Michael and St. Thomas seem to be separate buildings (JANIN, *Églises et monastères*<sup>2</sup>, p. 337). For the moment I think we have to reserve judgement.

(77) See Averil CAMERON, 'The Cult of the Theotokos in sixth-century Constantinople', *JTS*, n.s. 29 (1978), pp. 79 ff.; 'The Virgin's Robe: an Episode in the History of Early Seventh-Century Constantinople', *Byzantine Studies*, pp. 42-56; N. BAYNES, 'The Finding of the Virgin's Robe', *Byzantine Studies* (London, 1955), pp. 240 ff.; A. FROLOW, 'La dédicace de Constantinople dans la tradition byzantine', *Revue de l'hist. des religions*, 127 (1944), pp. 61 ff.



Hagia Sophia, and Justin's building work there gave rise to the belief that he himself had built the church<sup>(78)</sup>. But it is clear that it was a fifth-century building, which Justin II now restored, apparently after an earthquake, endowed, and above all in which he built a chapel for the Virgin's girdle<sup>(79)</sup>. Similarly at the great church of the Virgin at Blachernae, which was to be the psychological focus of the growing belief in the protection of Constantinople by the Virgin<sup>(80)</sup>, Justin added two apses, with verse inscriptions, in the first of which he is glorified as having been given victory in war by Christ<sup>(81)</sup>. This would imply a date in the early 570's, before the loss of Dara and Justin's descent into madness<sup>(82)</sup>. Justin's additions transformed the Blachernae church, originally a basilica<sup>(83)</sup>, into a cruciform shape. There was a distinct purpose to Justin's work in both churches of the Virgin, in the context of the development of her city cult, and especially if we put due weight on the prayer to the Virgin which Corippus attributes to the Empress Sophia in his panegyric – no literary set-piece like the parallel prayer to God the Father attributed to her husband, but a real devotional utterance putting into Latin the phraseology and thoughts of contemporary Greek hymns<sup>(84)</sup>. The empress probably spoke these words before an icon of the Virgin in the church of Chalkoprateia<sup>(85)</sup>. Perhaps near here Justin built the

(78) Already in THEOPHANES, p. 248 (hence my remark at n. 57). See JANIN, *Églises et monastères*<sup>2</sup>, p. 237.

(79) JANIN, *loc. cit.*, PREGER, II, pp. 226-7, 263.

(80) See *art. cit.* (n. 77).

(81) AP, I, 2:

Θεῶς Ἰουστινῶς, Σοφίης πόσις, ὃ πάρε Χριστῶς  
πάντα διαρρῶσθαι καὶ κλέος ἐν πολέμοις,  
μητρὸς ἀπειρογάμοιο δόμον σκάζοντα νοήσας,  
σαφὲν ἀποσκηδάσας τεύξε μιν ἀσφαλῶς.

Cf. also AP, I, 3.

(82) Justin's madness, following six 'good years' – JOHN OF EPHEBUS, HE, III, 1 f., but for John's chronology see Byzantion, 45 (1975), p. 15, n. 87; *Studies in Church History*, 13 (1976), p. 62 f. The loss of Dara brought on Justin's illness: EVAGRIUS, HE, V, 11; THEOPHYLACT, III, 11, 3.

(83) See JANIN, *Églises et monastères*<sup>2</sup>, p. 162. PROCOPIUS, *Aed.*, I, 3, seems to imply that Justinian, in the reign of Justin I, actually built the church, but Janin is perhaps right in thinking that this refers to the addition of a dome.

(84) *Iust.*, II, 52 f., with notes, and see JTS, n.s. 29 (1978), p. 82 f.

(85) See note on *Iust.*, II, 48; M. JUGIE, 'L'Église de Chalkoprateia et le culte de

church of St. James and placed in it the hair of John the Baptist and the remains of the holy women who brought the unguents<sup>(86)</sup>. Both churches of the Virgin were later regular stopping places in imperial ceremony<sup>(87)</sup>, and Blachernae was the scene of a great occasion at the end of Justin's reign when with the Caesar Tiberius in AD 577 he received there the exiled patriarch Eutychius on his recall to Constantinople after the death of Justin's ally John Scholasticus<sup>(88)</sup>.

We know little of Justin's work in the church of the Holy Apostles except that Theophanes says that he 'adorned' it, as he did other churches and monasteries<sup>(89)</sup>. The same is said of his activity in Hagia Sophia<sup>(90)</sup>; when later sources claim that he rebuilt the dome this is surely indeed a confusion between Justin and Justinian<sup>(91)</sup>. As for Justin's 'decoration' of Hagia Sophia, we can no longer accept the old view that Corippus's symbolic description of Hagia Sophia in his panegyric is a disguised allusion to a figural mosaic cycle added by Justin II<sup>(92)</sup>. The date of composition of the panegyric is too early for that, and in any case, the text makes it clear that this Trinitarian analysis of the church is purely symbolic, what one can see with the 'eyes of the mind'<sup>(93)</sup>. We cannot then

la ceinture de la Sainte Vierge à Constantinople', *EO*, 16 (1913), pp. 308 ff. Blachernae seems too far away for the reference in Corippus, and the famous icon there probably did not yet exist (see CAMERON, 'The Virgin's Robe' [*art. cit.*, n. 77]).

(86) PREGER, II, p. 263, see JANIN, *Églises et monastères*<sup>2</sup>, p. 253. It is not very clear from the text whether the *soros* mentioned is that of this church or of Chalkoprateia itself; the later sources perhaps suggest the latter – JANIN, *loc. cit.*

(87) Blachernae: *De Caer.*, I, pp. 147, 178 etc.; Chalkoprateia: *ibid.*, p. 165.

(88) *Vita Eutychii*, PG, 86, 2353 f.

(89) THEOPHANES, p. 242.

(90) *Ibid.*, cf. MESARITES, *loc. cit.* (n. 21).

(91) *Narratio de S. Sophia*, 28 (PREGER, I, p. 105).

(92) A. HEISENBERG, 'Die alten Mosaiken der Apostelkirche und der Hagia Sophia', *Εἰσαγωγή*, *Hommage international à l'université nationale de Grèce* (Athens, 1912), pp. 121 f., 143 f.; see CAMERON, *comm. on CORIPPUS, Iust.*, IV, 288.

(93) Cf. *Iust.*, IV, 292 *internis oculis illic pia cernitur esse...* For this symbolism applied to a church see the sixth/seventh century Syriac hymn on the cathedral at Edessa, discussed by A. GRABAR, 'Le témoignage d'une hymne syriaque sur l'architecture de la cathédrale d'Édesse et sur la symbolique de l'édifice ecclésiastique', *Cahiers archéol.*, 2 (1947), pp. 41 ff. In using the phrase *internis oculis* Corippus is in fact using the terminology normally employed by theological writers when introducing a Scriptural type or an extended figure, and we should be alert to its meaning here.



use Corippus's evidence to support a hypothesis which would in any case be extremely improbable<sup>(94)</sup>, and we are left uncertain as to the details of what Justin II did do in Hagia Sophia. But even if the idea of figural mosaics in the main church is untenable, and if Justin's most important church patronage centred on the churches of the Virgin in Constantinople, it seems typical that he should have been ambitious to leave at least some sort of mark on the city's main church.

As usual there is no indication of the mechanism by which all this artistic and architectural activity was organised and financed<sup>(95)</sup>, and probably because of the sources available, above all the *Patria*, the balance is heavily – indeed, almost exclusively – Constantinopolitan. We do know that Justin inherited a financial crisis at the beginning of the reign, as well as a general situation in which buildings had probably suffered as much as institutions from the neglect of Justinian's later years<sup>(96)</sup>. But he seems to have had funds of his own on which to draw<sup>(97)</sup>, and his wife's later complaints of Tiberius's extravagance, as well as Justin's own reputation for greed, suggest that he was able to least to some extent to refill the treasury<sup>(98)</sup>. His famous coronation speech, with its bizarre emphasis on the treasury as the stomach of the state, should after all be seen for what it is – a central statement of political theory and economic reality<sup>(99)</sup>. At any rate, Justin was both able and prepared to spend very large sums of money on the restoration of the consulship, which he presented to the people as embodying the return of justice and fairness<sup>(100)</sup>, but which actually involved massive expenditure, for example on giving games, on dress, on commemorative statuary, on the *sparsio*, when gold was literally thrown into the crowds along the processional route, on special

(94) C. MANGO, *The Mosaics of St. Sophia at Istanbul* (Washington, D.C., 1962), p. 93; cf. M. MUNDELL, *art. cit.* (n. 63), p. 70 f.

(95) For some useful remarks on this obscure subject see C. MANGO, *Byzantine Architecture* (Milan, 1974), pp. 11 ff.

(96) Above, n. 7.

(97) *Iust.*, II, 838 *thesauros fidei privatos ferre ministris / imperat...*

(98) See e.g. John of Ephesus, *HE*, III, 10, 11.

(99) Corippus, *Iust.*, II, 178-274, esp. II, 249 ff.

(100) *Iust.*, II, 349 f., cf. Anth. Plan., 72.

arrangements such as the erection of grandstands, and on largesse to important people<sup>(101)</sup>. In the context of this lavish expenditure it does not seem likely that Justin failed to have consular medallions struck, or to initiate consular iconography on silverware, even if reused, and our lack of such artefacts from this reign by comparison with the reigns of Tiberius II and Maurice is likely to be accidental only<sup>(102)</sup>. The reasons for the comparatively low-key treatment of Justin's second consulship in AD 568 remain puzzling<sup>(103)</sup>, but his first consulship is in itself enough to underline the intimate connection between imperial patronage and imperial policy. Justin's accession had to be carefully arranged, and a demonstration of imperial splendour, at whatever cost, was essential to cement its acceptance. Moreover, he owed it to a small group of people, who needed, like John Scholasticus, to be rewarded – a perfect outlet for consular largesse. The very attention which Justin gave to the church of the Holy Apostles, burial place of patriarchs as well as emperors, can be interpreted as a further sign of his closeness to John Scholasticus<sup>(104)</sup>, a union of emperor and patriarch expressed in part in terms of patronage and given visual staging again when the patriarch Eutychius died, in a ceremony that was the twin of the funeral of Justinian, stage-managed by Justin II<sup>(105)</sup>. If it is

(101) For all this see *Iust.*, IV, with notes. Largesse: *ibid.*, lines 103 f.

(102) See note on *Iust.*, IV, 103. A gold plaque in the De Clercq collection in Paris may be made from a consular medallion of Justin II – M. ROSS, 'A Byzantine Gold Medallion at Dumbarton Oaks', *DOP*, 11 (1957), p. 256, and fig. 7. I have suggested that the empress in the Vienna and Florence diptychs who wears a bust of an emperor in consular dress on her tablion may even be Sophia (CAMERON, *op. cit.* [n. 11], p. 198). Justin used old silver for his consular largesse (*Iust.*, IV, 109 f. *vetus argentum formas speciesque novatum / in varias, pressum titulis sculptumque figuris...*) but it must clearly have been newly engraved with consular themes. Gold largesse: *Iust.*, IV, 105. Justin's curule chair, of gold and jewels, surely bore consular motifs (*Iust.*, IV, 115 f.).

(103) See E. STEIN, 'Post-consulat et *autokratia*', *Mélanges Bidez* (1933-34), pp. 869-912 (= *Opera Minora Selecta* [Amsterdam, 1969], pp. 315 ff.).

(104) As suggested by Robin Cormack, and see above, p. 74 f.

(105) Eutychius – *Vita Eutychii*, PG, 80, 2234; Justinian – *Colloquia*, PG, II, 1-61. We do not happen to have an account of the funeral of John Scholasticus. For the Holy Apostles as a burying place see G. DOWNEY, 'The Tombs of the Byzantine Emperors at the Church of the Holy Apostles in Constantinople', *JHS*, 79 (1959), pp. 27 ff.; P. GRIERSON, 'The Tombs and Obits of the Byzantine



demonstrable that imperial ceremony increased in scope and complexity during the late sixth century<sup>(106)</sup>, then Justin II clearly contributed towards the restoration, after the last years of Justinian's reign, of the sense of imperial splendour that made such a development possible, as he did towards its physical setting and trappings. When Corippus describes the canopied throne of Justin on which he sat as he received the Avar envoys in November, AD 565<sup>(107)</sup>, the scene already has the theatrical magnificence, and many of the ideological connotations that Justin's own action later in building the Chrysotriklinos was to make even more fully manifest. And as we have seen, the visual expression of Justin's majesty extended abroad, in diplomatic gifts such as the Vatican cross and the relic and reliquary sent to Poitiers<sup>(108)</sup>, and in the despatch of imperial portraits, of which, though none survive, there must have been a great number<sup>(109)</sup>, showing Justin and Sophia together as they were shown (an empress together with her husband for the first time) on Justin's coins<sup>(110)</sup>.

I have argued elsewhere that the reign of Justin II marks both a peak and a turning-point in imperial art and ideology<sup>(111)</sup>, and it is worth briefly returning to this question now in the light of Justin's patronage. In the first place it is no longer possible to maintain that imperial and religious art are still kept strictly separate in this

Emperors', with an additional note by C. MANGO and I. ŠEVČENKO, *DOP*, 16 (1962), pp. 1 ff.

(106) See 'Images of Authority' (n. 5), pp. 6 ff.

(107) *Iust.*, III, 191 f.

(108) For a Lombard gold cross with the head of Justin II made from one of his coins see J. WERNER, *Münzdatierte austrasische Grabfunde* (Berlin-Leipzig, 1935), p. 132, no. 195, pl. V.

(109) Cf. E. HEITSCH, *Die griechische Dichterfragmente der römische Kaiserzeit*, 2nd ed., II (Göttingen, 1964), no. XLII, and see KITZINGER, *art. cit.* (n. 5), p. 121 f.; St. Symeon the Younger, *PG*, 96, 2, 3216 f. (letter to Justin II; but P. VAN DEN VEN, *Le Muséon*, 70 (1957), p. 3, argues that it was addressed to Justinian (and for the confusion between the names Justin and Justinian see *ibid.*, p. 3, n. 12, 5, n. 23).

(110) Justin II's coins as marking the apogee of the enthroned emperor type – GRABAR, *L'Empereur dans l'art byzantin* (n. 5), p. 24.

(111) Averil CAMERON, 'Corippus's Poem on Justin II: a terminus of antique art?', *Annali della Scuola Normale di Pisa*, ser. III, v. 1 (1975), pp. 129 ff.

period<sup>(112)</sup>. The most striking feature of Corippus's panegyric on Justin is in fact its mingling, even in a poem still reluctant to use openly Christian themes<sup>(113)</sup>, of imperial and Christian symbolism and interpretation. This alone should be a warning against assigning too rigid categories to art works of the period. Secondly, while it does seem that Justin was more ready than previous emperors to abase himself in public as the slave of God<sup>(114)</sup> and to lend support to growing religious trends such as the cult of the Virgin and the increasing popularity of icons (it was surely Justin who sponsored the bringing of the great Christ-icon of Camuliana to Constantinople in AD 574)<sup>(115)</sup>, we also have to remember that he sponsored consular (hence still Roman) themes in art, put Constantinople on his coins<sup>(116)</sup>, and that his wife had had a funeral pall for Justinian woven with triumphal scenes very reminiscent of Justinian's mosaic on the roof of the Chalce<sup>(117)</sup>. A change there does seem to be, but as yet the triumphal themes of traditional Roman imperial art are still able to exist side by side with a more priestly interpretation of the emperor's rôle.

Certain objectives can be emphasised in Justin's patronage, even if no overall pattern. His building work did not much alter the shape of the city, but he added his own statues to several of the most important public places, and left his mark on the main churches and the palace. There is no sign of lack of funds, and building seems to have continued even after Justin's illness. Much of Justin's patronage seems to have been directed towards one end – that of demonstrating his own position and the authority of the throne, essential for Justinian's successor, especially if he had no particular claim to fame himself. In Justinian's last years buildings had probably been as neglected as politics, and Justin's need was to reestablish a sense of imperial glory, which he did above all by his

(112) So GRABAR, *L'Iconoclasme byzantin*, p. 23.

(113) Cf. his treatment of Justin's dream in which he is crowned by the Virgin (*Iust.*, I, 33 f.).

(114) See 'An Emperor's Abdication' *Byzantinoslavica*, 37 (1976), pp. 161 ff.

(115) CEDREUS, I, 685. See KITZINGER, *DOP*, 8 (1954), p. 125.

(116) JOHN OF EPHEBUS, *HE*, III, 15; for exx. see W. VAN DEN VEN, *Imperial Byzantine Coins in the British Museum*, I (London, 1908), pp. 75 ff.

(117) CORIPPUS, *Iust.*, I, 276 f.; the Chalce mosaic – *Proc. Aed.*, I, 10.



clever restoration of the consulship and the patronage which that implied. These activities of Justin II must have stimulated artistic output, and it can surely be no longer maintained without qualification that this was a time of 'grave decline', not can we suppose in fairness that techniques overall had suffered: indeed, there was originality in some areas<sup>(118)</sup>. Justin's buildings in the city are still in the main either personal or else aimed at imperial splendour, and there is relatively little sign of imperial concern for the welfare of the population, or of their needs. Politics, rather than economics, seems to have been the motivating force for Justin, and it is in this light that we should see his church building and restoration programmes, his support of the extensive patriarchal palace complex and the religious conception which underlies the planning and building of the Chrysotriklinos. In short, the nature of our sources perhaps permits after all only a rather one-sided view of imperial patronage in this period, in which certain aspects are emphasised and others forgotten, but it is a view which allows us to see that the late sixth century was itself a time of growth and development, and which provides a more meaningful context for the change in Byzantine religion and culture that was undoubtedly taking place.

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(118) See for example A. ALFÖLDI and E. CRUIKSHANK, 'A Sassanian silver phalera', *DOP*, 11 (1957), p. 244, n. 30. For the silverware in general, see also the useful remarks and bibliography in J. P. C. KENT and K. S. PAINTER (eds.), *The Wealth of the Roman World. Gold and Silver AD 300-700* (London, British Museum Publications, 1972), pp. 83 ff.

## NOTES ON THE SOPHIAE, THE SOPHIANAE AND THE HARBOUR OF SOPHIA

Among modern attempts to disentangle the confused mass of sources on the palaces and the harbour which Justin II named after his wife Sophia only that of R. Guiland has taken full account of the evidence of Corippus' poem *de laudibus Justinii Minoris*<sup>(1)</sup>. Yet apart from one<sup>(2)</sup> poem in the Anthology Corippus is our only contemporary source for these buildings. It seems worth indicating some points where Guiland's interpretation should be supplemented or emended; especially so since the second edition of R. Janin's *Constantinople Byzantine* (1964) still leaves something to be desired in its treatment of these problems.

There are two places where Corippus refers to a palace connected with Justin II — I, 97 ff, where he describes the place where Justin and Sophia heard the news of Justinian's death in November 565, and IV, 287, where he refers to 'Sophianarum splendentia tecta novarum' as (l. 288) the 'principis aula'. To take the latter passage first, we have

(1) Cf. R. JANIN, *Topographie de Constantinople byzantine: le port Sophien et les quartiers environnants*, in *Études byzantines*, 1 (1943), 116 f., *Constantinople byzantine*, 1st ed. Paris (1950), 2nd ed. Paris (1964), R. GUILLAND, *Les ports de Byzance sur la Propontide*, in *Byzantion*, 23 (1953), 181 f. Corippus is not mentioned in the first two works, and in Janin<sup>2</sup> only under the heading of the Sophiae palace — see below. Earlier bibliography is cited in JANIN, *Const. Byz.*, 428, 489. Professor C. Mango kindly read an earlier draft of these notes.

(2) See below. Another poem, *AP*, 17, 64, referring to a statue of Justin set up at a harbour (unspecified) by a certain Theodorus the prefect, probably belongs to the Theodorus three times mentioned under Justin I (*AP*, IX, 697, cf. 696) (cf. n. 3, p. 19). There is no suggestion that the Emperor built the harbour in question, nor do we hear of a Theodorus in our sources for the harbour of Sophia.



here clear evidence that the usual dating of the palace which Justin II built across the Bosphorus to 568 (following Theophanes [A.M. 6061])<sup>(1)</sup> must be reconsidered. Though some sources are confused, it is certain that the Bosphorus palace was the one called Sophianae<sup>(2)</sup>, and therefore that this reference in Corippus is to that palace and no other. It is strange that Janin<sup>(3)</sup>, even after the work of Guiland, refers *Laud. Just.*, IV, 287, which could hardly be clearer, to the palace known as Sophiae, which was located on the Western shore of the Propontis, in the district known by the same name<sup>(4)</sup>. If the Sophianae was new when Corippus wrote bk. IV, what date do we arrive at? Unfortunately it is not possible to be completely precise about the date of bk. IV. It was written after the first three books (III, 405 f.), which were written towards the end of 566<sup>(5)</sup>. It would be surprising, however, if it was written *long* afterwards; since it celebrates the inauguration of Justin's first consulship (Jan. 1st, 566) it is natural to place it as near to the event as possible, and in any case before he took a second consulship in 568<sup>(6)</sup>. If bk. IV was composed in 567 it would tie in nicely with the evidence of *AP*, IX, 657, a poem by Marianus Scho-

(1) 568 — JANIN<sup>1</sup>, 152; JANIN<sup>2</sup>, 153; GUILLAND, 192. The same dating in S. MIRANDA, *Les Palais des Empereurs byzantins*, Mexico (1964), 120.

(2) Sources: GUILLAND, 191, n. 6; cf. JANIN<sup>2</sup>, 489. It was probably situated at Çengelköy (PARGOIRE, *Héria*, in *BIRC*, IV [1899], 43). Cf. Ps. Codinus, *PREGER*, III, 267, where Cod. B distinguishes the Sophianae as πέρα τοῦ Στενοῦ. On Zonaras XIV, 10 see below.

(3) JANIN<sup>2</sup>, 134.

(4) Sources: JANIN, *art. cit.*, 122 f., *Const. Byz.*, 427 (not mentioning Corippus), GUILLAND, 193.

(5) Cf. PARTSCH, *MGH AA III*, 2 (1879), XLVI. This is assuming that I, 60-1 refer to the conspiracy of Aetherius and Addaeus, which Theophanes puts in 566/7 (p. 373 Bonn, cf. Evagrius V, 3). There is no reason however against supposing that this took place very early in the year. The *terminus ante quem* for bks. I-III at least is 568, the year of the Lombard invasion (cf. *pref.*, 12), and of the Avar-Lombard alliance (cf. *pref.*, 4 f., III, 232 f.) as well as of Justin's 2nd consulship (cf. II, 352, IV *passim*).

(6) *Contra*, Foggini (Bonn ed. LXV) who dates bk. IV later than 568, solely on the basis of Theophanes' date for the Sophianae.

lasticus from Agathias' *Cycle*<sup>(1)</sup> which clearly refers to the Sophianae<sup>(2)</sup>. Both Corippus and Marianus give the impression that the palace was finished when they wrote; if, as has been argued elsewhere<sup>(3)</sup>, Agathias' *Cycle* was not published later than 567/8, Corippus and Marianus together suggest that Theophanes' date for the Sophianae is too late, and that we ought perhaps to set the building of the Sophianae as early as 565. This early date (before Justin's accession) might be implied by Corippus, since the dramatic date of this book is the beginning of 566. But more probably the reference to the new palace is an anachronism put in as a compliment to Justin's building activity (and it certainly seems rather forced in the context); even so the construction of the palace could not be set later than 566/7. If the palace was begun before Justin came to the throne, but not completed until he was Emperor, we would have the most economical way of accounting for the location of this building in the quarter where he had lived as curopalates<sup>(4)</sup>.

There remains the identification of the palace described but not named in *Laud. Just.*, I, 97 f. Janin does not mention this passage, while Guiland refers it to an earlier palace erected by Justin on the site later to be occupied by the Sophianae<sup>(5)</sup>. His reason is that Corippus' statement (I, 110-111) that from it Justin and Sophia were accustomed

undivagum spectare fretum curvasque carinas  
omnia vectantes gemini commercia mundi

could refer only to the Bosphorus, because of the suggestion in 'gemini mundi'. It seems to me that there is a stronger reason for identifying this palace with the Sophiae, on the Propontis. For quite apart from the fact (hardly in itself

(1) See below.

(2) JANIN<sup>2</sup>, 153. Further below.

(3) *The Cycle of Agathias*, in *JHS*, 86 (1966), 6 ff. The *Cycle* is usually dated to the reign of Justinian, but this is certainly too early. The same *terminus ante* (i.e. the Lombard invasion) applies for the *Cycle* (cf. Agathias' preface, *AP*, IV, 3) as for the *Laudes Justinianae*. Cf. also *BICS*, 13 (1966), 101 ff.

(4) See JANIN<sup>2</sup>, *loc. cit.*

(5) *O.c.*, 192-3.



conclusive) that after hearing the news Justin leaves for the Imperial Palace in the middle of the night with no mention of the sea crossing that would be necessary had he been coming from the Sophianae (I, 187 f.), Corippus lays great stress on the view from the palace over, on the one side, the 'immensum pelagus', and, on the other, over a harbour which he then describes in some eight lines (I, 102 f.). If this is the Sophianae, what is the *pelagus*? And surely this harbour so fulsomely described by Corippus, in which he says Justin and Sophia took such pleasure, is the so-called Harbour of Sophia, rebuilt and renamed by Justin on the site of the old harbour of Julian in the Sophiae district near the Sophiae palace<sup>(1)</sup>. Surely Corippus is describing the harbour at such relative length as a compliment to Justin, who had built it, and to Sophia, whose name it bore. It does not seem out of place that Corippus should refer to trading vessels from two continents ('gemini mundi') using the harbour in safety where before they had been buffeted by the sea. The palace then is the Sophiae, on the Propontis shore. That this is so is confirmed by a curiously parallel notice in Ps. Codinus<sup>(2)</sup>. Here the writer describes Sophia as looking out from her palace (τοῦ παλατίου — unnamed) at the ships being battered about in the waters below. In her distress she asked Justin for money to build a harbour there — the harbour of Sophia. In Ps. Codinus, as in Corippus, the palace can only be the Sophiae.

So *Laud. Just.*, I, 97 f. proves that the harbour of Sophia and the Sophiae palace must both, like the Sophianae palace, be dated earlier than usually supposed<sup>(3)</sup>. The Sophiae palace

(1) Sources: [Leo grammaticus], 135 Bonn, Theod. Melit., 94 Tafel, Cedrenus, I, 685 Bonn, cf. JANIN<sup>2</sup>, 231 f. It was generally known as the λιμὴν τῆς Σοφίας but also as the λιμὴν τῶν Σοφίων (Ps. Codinus, II, 184 Preger) or even ὁ Σοφιστῶν λιμὴν (*ib.*, III, 230).

(2) PREGER, III, 229-30, a story which is paraphrased without further comment by A. van MILLINGEN, *Byzantine Constantinople* (1899), 291. Note that Ps. Codinus calls Sophia Empress, a good example of how an epithet given for identification purposes only can come to look as if it gives a chronological indication.

(3) For the palace cf. e.g. GUILLAND, 193 — built *par l'empereur Tibère II* (on the basis of THEOPHANES, A.M. 6072 — see below). In his article of 1943 Janin accepted this dating on the grounds that

is attributed by the chroniclers variously to Justin, Sophia and Tiberius<sup>(1)</sup>. Corippus shows that it was built (whether by Justin or Sophia) before Justin became Emperor. The discrepancies in the later sources can be easily understood if we accept the story that Tiberius, not unnaturally, installed Sophia in this palace during his reign<sup>(2)</sup>; from this it was an easy step to the conclusion that he had built it himself. We must now throw out Cedrenus' dating of both palace and harbour to the 11th year of Justin's reign<sup>(3)</sup>. The harbour was rebuilt at the same time as or soon after the Sophiae palace.

From the earliest times the sources have confused the two palaces, and some, misled by the congruence of name, actually call the region around the Harbour of Sophia *Sophianae*<sup>(4)</sup>. Thus it is that Zonaras called the palace near the harbour *Sophianae*, connecting it with the poem preserved in the Anthology as AP, IX, 657<sup>(5)</sup>. The *Palatinus* and Planudes attribute this poem to Marianus Scholasticus, one of the contributors to Agathias' *Cycle*<sup>(6)</sup>, but Zonaras ascribes it to

Theophanes was our earliest source (p. 122 f.). In *Const. Byz.*<sup>1</sup>, he concluded (p. 133) that it was begun by Justin and finished by Tiberius. Now in *Const. Byz.*<sup>2</sup>, p. 134 he takes *Laud. Just.*, IV, 287 as referring to the Sophiae, and absurdly supposes that IV, 271 f. show that it was begun by Justinian; those lines are however about the church of St. Sophia, which Corippus is using as the basis of an inept play on the name of the new Empress. For the harbour cf. the later sources which seem to be placing it after Justin's accession, if they can be pressed so far.

(1) Justin: THEOD. MELIT., *l.c.*; CEDRENUS, *l.c.*; Sophia: ANON. SATHAS, *Bibl. graec.*, VII, 104; Tiberius: THEOPHANES, A.M. 6072, I, 385 Bonn. Ps. CODINUS, PREGER, II, 255 does not attribute the building to Maurice (JANIN, *art. cit.*) but seems instead to be referring to a restoration — τὰ ... παλαιὰ παλάτια τῶν Σοφίων ἀνῆγειρεν.

(2) THEOPHANES, *l.c.*, THEOD. MELIT., 95.

(3) I. 685 Bonn.

(4) Cf. JANIN, *art. cit.*, 124.

(5) ZONARAS, XIV, 10.

(6) See JHS (1966). Th. PREGER, *Inscriptiones Graecae metricae* (1891), no. 211, supports Zonaras' ascription to Agathias on the grounds that Marianus Scholasticus is the Marianus of Ephesus who wrote iambic paraphrases of Theocritus, Apollonius Rhodius, Callimachus, Aratus and Nicander in the reign of Anastasius. But this Marianus was an ex-consul, ex-prefect and patrician ('SUIDAS',



Agathias himself. There are good reasons for supposing that he has made a mistake. The *Palatinus* at least is earlier than Zonaras. If we had reason to suppose that Zonaras had taken his ascription from the inscription itself this consideration would have no force; but it is unlikely that Zonaras *did* go to the stone itself. Not long before this passage he quotes a poem by Agathias on Justinian's bridge over the Sangarios <sup>(1)</sup>, attributing it to Agathias, under whose name it appears in the *Palatinus* and Planudes. It so happens that Constantine Porphyrogenitus also quotes the poem <sup>(2)</sup>, but without giving the name of the poet. His quotation is independent of a literary source <sup>(3)</sup>, and we can assume that Agathias' name did not occur on the bridge itself; so Zonaras must have derived it from a copy of the *Cycle* or from an anthology source. If so his attribution of the Sophianae poem to Agathias is likely to be a miscopying or a careless reference <sup>(4)</sup>.

In any case, the poem must date from 566/7 and must refer, as Gyllius already realised in the 16th c. <sup>(5)</sup>, to the Sophianae

s.v.); surely he would have been given one at least of these high titles had he been the *Cycle* poet, on the analogy of Macedonius the Consul, Julianus the ex-prefect, Cyrus the ex-consul etc. In view of the Byzantine predilection for titles and precedence, it is unlikely that Marianus would have been content with a mere *scholasticus*. Nor would a 5th c. poet have found his way into the *Cycle*, a collection of contemporary verse. And it might seem odd that one who was a kind of literary populariser (see Alan CAMERON, *Historia*, XIV [1965], 482) should himself have written traditional epigrams; it would be more tempting to regard Marianus of Eleutheropolis as a representative of an attempt to establish the iambic metre as the vehicle of Byzantine poetry and Agathias and his school as a temporary reaction in this inevitable development.

(1) XIV, 7, cf. AP, IX, 641.

(2) *De Them.*, I, p. 27 Bonn.

(3) He introduces it with the words *γέφυρα ... ἐπιγραφὴν ἔχουσα τοιαύτην, ἣτις γέγραπται ἐν μίᾳ τῶν πλακῶν οὕτως λέγουσα ...*

(4) Writers of the period seem to have had little interest in the exact ascriptions of poems they quote from anthologies. See A.S.F. Gow, *The Greek Anthology: Sources and Ascriptions*, in *Hellenic Society Supp. Paper* 9 (1958), 26, n. 5 and K. PREISENDANZ, *Gnomon*, 34 (1962), 656. «Suidas» quotes frequently from the Anthology (probably even using the *Palatinus* itself — J. BASSON, *De Cephalae et Planude syllogisque minoribus*, Diss. Berlin (1917), 31) yet never once names an author.

(5) *De topographia Constantinopoleos*, (1561), II, 98.

palace on the Bosphorus shore. Whereas Corippus' reference to the trade of two continents would suit any location in the neighbourhood of Constantinople where seaborne traffic was carried on, this poem's explicit mention of the strait (*πορθμός*) which separates Europe and Asia can only be a reference to the Stenon —

Ὀππόθι τε μνομένης χθονὸς ἀνδιχα πόντον ἀνοίγει  
πλαγκτὸς ἀλικλύστων πορθμός ἐπ' ἡϊόνων

(ll. 1-2).

And surely there is a point in the last two lines beyond the obvious one of the linking of two continents. The poet addresses Rome (Constantinople) and asks her to look out at Asia opposite —

ἄξιον, ὦ Ῥώμη μεγαλοκρατές, ἀντία σεῖο  
κάλλος ἀπ' Εὐρώπης δέρεται εἰς Ἀσίην.

(ll. 5-6).

Constantinople must turn its eyes to the new palace built on the Asian shore of the Bosphorus. There is no corresponding emphasis in the Corippus passage. In spite of the superficial similarity of AP, IX, 657 and *Laud. Just.*, I, 97 f. (not the only likeness between Corippus and the *Cycle* <sup>(1)</sup>) they must refer to different palaces — the Sophianae and the Sophiae respectively.

But these two are not all. A third palace built by Justin II is mentioned in the *Ecclesiastical History* of John of Ephesus, another contemporary source (III, 24). It is clearly dated by John to the latter half of his schematic division of Justin's reign, and I mention it only because it has been identified with the palace of the Sophiae <sup>(2)</sup>. This cannot be right, for John places it in the north-western part of the city, whereas the Sophiae was in the south-east. A further point to mislead us: this palace, says John, was built on the site of Justin's former home. This sounds suspiciously like the Sophianae, but again geography is against the identification. In fact

(1) *BICS*, 13 (1966), *JHS*, 86 (1966).

(2) Eng. Trans., R. PAYNE SMITH (1860), 205.

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it is the palace mentioned by Theophanes and dated to 569 (A.M. 6062), a palace which, as Theophanes also says, Justin built in a suburb where he had lived before. Theophanes makes it clear (though I accept neither his date for the Sophianae nor his attribution of the Sophiae to Tiberius) that these were three distinct palaces — and not the only ones built by Justin either.

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It might be of use to take this opportunity of recording some points, noticed at a first reading, where the use of Anthology evidence in R. Janin's *Constantinople Byzantine*<sup>2</sup> could be supplemented. Although referring in his preface to Waltz's edition of the Anthology, Janin cites it in his text only from the Didot edition. This is surprising in itself, and can be seriously misleading for a subject where the lemmata to the poems are often vital for the interpretation. The study of the reliability of the lemmata is an essential preliminary to any attempt to assign poems to their correct subjects or dates, and for this the editions of Stadtmueller, Waltz, and Beckby are indispensable, though not ideal. I append a few supplements to Janin's Anthology references.

a) When discussing the library known as Helicon Janin says of *APL*, 70-1 that they refer to 'Julien, préfet de la ville sous Zénon ou sous Justin II' (1). This from the first edition; in the second he says simply that he was city prefect under Justin II and Tiberius (2). That this Julian belongs to the reign of Zeno seems certain from the preceding poem, *APL*, 69:

Ζήνωνα πολίταρχος Ἰουλιανὸς βασιλῆα.  
Ζήνωνος παράκοιτιν Ἰουλιανὸς Ἀριάδνην.

This is surely the same Julian — *APL*, 70,2 also calls him Ἰουλιανοῦ πολίταρχον.

b) On the obelisk erected in Constantinople by Theodosius

(1) JANIN<sup>1</sup>, 161.

(2) JANIN<sup>2</sup>, 162.

in 390, Janin claims to be reproducing the Greek and Latin inscriptions from the monument (1). He does not point out, however, that the Greek version is preserved also in the Anthology (*AP*, IX, 682), nor that his own version is that of Planudes, who reads *Πρόκλος* for the impossible *Πρόκλος* of l. 4 of the inscription itself. As for the Latin inscription, Janin has printed in l. 4 'victus ego duobusque diebus' without indicating that 'duobus' is a conjecture; the inscription itself reads 'domitusque' (2).

c) The Theodorus three times city prefect of *AP*, IX, 696-7 could not possibly be the Western consul Mallius Theodorus, cos. 399 (Janin<sup>2</sup>, 159) (3).

d) Janin<sup>2</sup> persists in referring *AP*, IX, 658-9, on the restoration of the Great Praetorium by Domninus, to the reign of Justin I, although in both editions he dates Domninus elsewhere to that of Justin II (Janin<sup>2</sup>, 167, cf. 89; on p. 344 of the second edition he is back again under Justin I). Domninus certainly belongs to the reign of Justin II; *AP*, IX, 658 and 659, by Paul the Silentiary and Theaetetus Scholasticus, must be taken together with *AP*, IX, 812-3, two anonymous poems commemorating statues of Justin II and Sophia set up at the entrance to the Great Praetorium by one Domninus. It would be perverse to deny that this is the Domninus of IX, 658 and 659, and once this is granted, it follows that the Justin mentioned in *AP*, IX, 658 is Justin II (4).

e) Janin<sup>2</sup>, 118 strangely attributes *AP*, IX, 655, on the Palace of Magnaura 'dont la construction est attribuée à Héraclius' to 'consulaire Julien d'Égypte'. In fact the poem is anonymous, and Janin has simply taken over the heading

(1) JANIN<sup>2</sup>, 190.

(2) See now Alan CAMERON, *A biographical note on Claudian*, in *Athenaeum*, XLIV (1966), 32 ff. The inscription is published in *CIL*, VI, 1163.

(3) Mallius Theodorus' full career is known; the Theodorus ἐπαρχος must be the Theodorus ἐπαρχὸς mentioned by Mallius, 416 Bonn, sub anno 524.

(4) On these poems see *JHS*, 86 (1966), 21.

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from the previous poem, 654. Julian was not in any case an ex-consul but an ex-prefect <sup>(1)</sup>; and a poet who certainly flourished in the early years of Justinian could hardly have written a poem commemorating Heraclius and his son.

f) Janin<sup>2</sup>, 156, n. 1, on *APL*, 13, refers to Aurelian as consul and three times city prefect, citing Seeck in *PW* (II, col. 2428-9). In fact Seeck clearly states that Aurelian was city prefect once only. His other two prefectures were praetorian. This much is clear, though their precise dates are disputed <sup>(2)</sup>.

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(1) *Ib.*, 12.

(2) Cf. now S. MAZZARINO, *Stilicone* (1942), 349 f. : A. H. M. JONES, *JRS*, 58 (1964), 81.



## A NATIVITY POEM OF THE SIXTH CENTURY A.D.

THE Latin poem of twenty-four lines which I shall discuss not only opens up questions of the development of Marian themes and imagery in Greek and Latin poetry of the sixth century A.D., especially in relation to the iconography of the Virgin, but also allows us to glimpse once again the intimate contacts which existed at high levels of society between Rome and Constantinople. In this case, as so rarely happens, it is actually possible to demonstrate a personal connection, with implications for a community of ideas between East and West that we sometimes tend to underestimate. The poem brings us into the world of Gregory the Great and his friendships within the court circles of Constantinople in the 580s, and especially with those highborn Roman émigrés whose presence in Constantinople in the later sixth century was still to make the Eastern capital seem like a cosmopolitan city.<sup>1</sup>

But first, there are textual problems to be discussed. The best version of the poem currently available is by Riese:<sup>2</sup>

Virgo parens hac luce deumque virumque creavit  
Gnara puerperii, nescia coniugii.  
Obtulit haec iussis uterum docuitque futuros,  
Sola capax Christi quod queat esse fides.  
Credidit et tumuit: verbum pro semine sumsit.  
Clauserunt magnum parvula membra deum. 5  
Conditor extat opus, servi rex induit artus  
Mortalemque domum vivificator habet.  
Ipse sator semenque sui matrisque creator,  
Filius ipse hominis, qui deus est hominum. 10  
Adfulsit partus, lucem lux nostra petivit,  
Hospitii linquens ostia clausa sui.  
Virginis et matris servatur gloria consors:  
Mater das hominem noscere, virgo deum.  
Unius colitur duplex substantia nati:  
Vir, deus, haec duo sunt; unus utrumque tamen. 15  
Spiritus huic genitorque suus sine fine cohaerent,  
Triplicitas simplex simplicitasque triplex.  
Bis genitus, sine matre opifex, sine patre redemptor,  
Celsus utroque modo, celsior unde minor. 20

1. For a good counter to conventional views of the separation of East and West, see P. Brown, "Eastern and Western Christendom in Late Antiquity: A Parting of the Ways," *Studies in Church History* 13 (1976): 1-23. I am grateful to Professor Thomas Gelzer for helpful comments and suggestions.

2. *Anth. Lat.* 1. 2. 494c Buecheler-Riese (Leipzig, 1906).

## A NATIVITY POEM OF THE SIXTH CENTURY A.D.

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Sic voluit nasci, domuit qui crimina mundi,  
Et mortem iussit mortuus ipse mori.  
Nostras ille suo tueatur numine vitas;  
Protegat ille tuum, Rusticana, genus.

In Riese's edition the poem is headed *Andreae oratoris*. The heading is given in A, the Antwerp MS of Sedulius, no. 126, of the tenth century, which Riese cites in his apparatus.<sup>3</sup> Although Riese appears at first sight to have revised his edition of the poem in the light of C. Caesar's article on this manuscript, on closer inspection his reporting in the apparatus criticus poem in his *Adversaria*,<sup>4</sup> "ex codice ignoto, cum A faciens," as Riese reports. Thus Barth's testimony would seem to have independent value. But the very article cited by Riese shows clearly that Barth was not using a manuscript at all, but derived his knowledge of the poem entirely from Poelmann's edition of Prosper of Aquitaine, which appeared in 1560.<sup>5</sup> In this edition our poem appears between Prosper's epigrams and his *De providentia*. Poelmann found this poem in the same Sedulius manuscript (our A) which contained the works of Prosper, and edited it along with them. When Riese attributes to Barth the testimony that our poem is *Andreae oratoris de Maria virgine ad Rusticianam carmen*, he implies that Barth had found these words in an independent manuscript. The truth is that Barth copied them from Poelmann's edition, where they were used by Poelmann as a heading for the poem.<sup>6</sup> Thus the words *de Maria virgine* have no manuscript poem itself. We shall find that this is relevant for the interpretation of the poem, and we should not be misled by Poelmann's facile assumption that it is a poem about the Virgin.

There is in fact a different version of the last line which we must now consider. J.-B. de Rossi also edited this poem—but from Vaticanus Palatinus 833, where it belongs to a collection of inscriptional poems from the city of Rome.<sup>7</sup> In this version the last line reads: *Protegat ille tuum Gregori presule genus*. The clumsy and unmetrical *Gregori presule* immediately looks like a substitution for the metrically perfect reference to Rusticana, and De Rossi, knowing the Rusticana version from Barth but unaware of the Antwerp manuscript of Sedulius in which it is included, himself realized that the Rusticana version must have been the original, and that our poem must have been used again for a different person.<sup>8</sup> In its context in Vaticanus Palatinus 833 the Gregory version is clearly pre-seventh century, and I

3. Riese refers to the discussion of this MS by C. Caesar, "Die Antwerpener Handschrift des Sedulius," *RhM* 56 (1901): 247-71; the MS was not used in Huemer's 1885 edition of Sedulius (*CSEL* 10), which also contains the epigrams of Prosper of Aquitaine and some short poems, including the one under discussion.

4. *Adversaria* 56. 16 (Frankfurt, 1624; 2nd ed., 1628).

5. See Caesar, "Sedulius," p. 264.

6. *Ibid.*, p. 265. Caesar conveniently quotes the relevant passage in Barth which shows the connection.

7. *ICUR*, 2.1. 63 (p. 109).

8. *Ibid.* (note).

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think that De Rossi was undoubtedly right to assume that the Gregory named as *praesul* can only be Pope Gregory the Great (590–604).<sup>9</sup> If, then, the poem was adapted for Gregory I from an existing version, two different versions of it were in existence already in the sixth century; as Caesar observed,<sup>10</sup> this can be clearly seen in the existing manuscript tradition, for different manuscripts vary according to whether they derive from the Rusticiana version, which I shall argue is Constantinopolitan, or from the Rusticiana version, which is Roman. Such readings or headings as individual manuscripts may have must then be interpreted in the light of this dual tradition. Thus Vaticanus Palatinus 487, which contains only the last two lines, has them in the Rusticiana version. On the other hand, a twelfth-century MS in Trinity College, Cambridge,<sup>11</sup> clearly stems from the later adaptation, as we shall see.

This manuscript deserves more attention than it has had so far. Riese cites it only on line 24, and it is clear from his preface and apparatus criticus on *Anthologia Latina* 786b that he had not seen the MS himself.<sup>12</sup> The last line of this version is perhaps an even clumsier attempt to mend the meter: *Protegit ille tuum genus Gregorie praesul*. Its textual affinity is clearly with Vaticanus Palatinus 833, although in this later version the text is disturbed by the omission of lines 15 and 16 and the displacement of lines 17 and 18 after lines 19 and 20.<sup>13</sup> For our purposes, however, the heading of the poem in this MS is of more interest than the text presented, for before the text itself are written in red the words *Versus beati pape Gregorii*, and then a heading which reads: *In diem natalem Christi*. Several points can be made. First, the poem is here detached from its context of Christian inscriptions. In this manuscript it is the last of seventeen short poems, mostly unattributed and without titles, of which all the rest are about calendars or planets and signs of the zodiac. The first twelve are about the twelve months of the year. Some attempt has surely been made in the heading to give the poem a title which will make clear its association with the others in the group, and the connection is precisely that it is about a specific day—Christmas Day. The author of the headings, whoever he was, was in no doubt that the poem referred to Pope Gregory the Great, or that it was a poem not primarily about the Virgin (as Poelmann and Barth thought), but actually about the birth of Christ. This is a valuable clue in the exposition of the poem, and one that will lead us to reject De Rossi's assumption, based on his acceptance of the characterization of the poem as being *de Maria virgine*, that it was written perhaps as an inscription to accompany a picture of the Vir-

9. Ibid.; nothing in De Rossi's collection dates from a later period.  
10. "Sedulius," p. 266.  
11. Cantabrig. Tr. 0. 2. 24.

12. See pp. iv, 266 (vol. 1, pt. 2).  
13. My thanks to the Librarian of Trinity College, Cambridge, for allowing me to consult this MS, and for subsequently providing me with a photograph. See M. R. James, *The Western MSS. in the Library of Trinity College, Cambridge*, vol. 3 (Cambridge, 1902), pp. 116–17. Readings in common with Vat. Pal. 833 are *aeperunt* (6), *fit fabricator* (7), *pater* (10), *dans* (14).

gin holding the child Jesus.<sup>14</sup> Our poem found its way into this twelfth-century MS collection of miscellaneous grammatical and technical works, many of them by medieval authors (Charlemagne, Alcuin, Bede), not as an epigram accompanying an icon of the Virgin, but as a poem concerned with a date—the date of the birth of Christ.

Before we can take this argument further, the Rusticiana mentioned in the original version must be identified. The attribution to Andreas *orator* given in A is not much help. No suitable Andreas seems to emerge from the files of the second volume of *PLRE*. As for Rusticiana, De Rossi assumed that she was the wife of Boethius, whose sufferings after the Gothic capture of Rome in 546 are described by Procopius.<sup>15</sup> Forced to beg for her bread, she was saved from the enmity of the Goths by Totila himself.<sup>16</sup> The daughter of Symmachus, she was the mother of the consuls of 522, themselves called Boethius and Symmachus.<sup>17</sup> But after 546 there is no further evidence. Another Rusticiana died in 538,<sup>18</sup> but nothing more is known about her. But there is a third, the granddaughter of Boethius, called by the same name as her grandmother.<sup>19</sup> This lady moved from Rome to Constantinople toward the end of the sixth century, and was there one of the circle of Westerners around the court of the Emperor Maurice.<sup>20</sup> We are still in the world of the great families who could span both Rome and Constantinople. Boethius belonged to the Anicii; thus this Rusticiana was one of the clan that had been such a factor in the politics of the first half of the century.<sup>21</sup> So far the Western aristocrats in Constantinople at the end of the sixth century have received less study, but their influence must still have been considerable, and Rusticiana the younger was a leading member of the group. We do not know exactly when she moved to the East, but her daughter married Apion III of Oxyrhynchus, probably early in the 590s.<sup>22</sup> She would then surely have been in Constantinople when Gregory,

14. See the discussion in *ICUR*, 2.1. 63 (p. 109): "Epigramma fortasse appictum imagini Virginis puerum Iesum gestantis."

15. *BG* 3. 20. 27.

16. *BG* 3. 20. 29–31.

17. See *PLRE* 2, s.v. "Rusticiana" 1.

18. *CIL*, 6. 32042, described as *inl(ustris) f(emina)*.

19. See J. Sundwall, *Abhandlungen zur Geschichte des ausgehenden Römertums* (Helsingfors, 1919), pp. 102–3.

20. We await a study by T. S. Brown which will illuminate this circle. In the meantime see F. Homes Dudden, *Gregory the Great. His Place in History and Thought*, vol. 1 (London, 1905), pp. 154–55; E. Stein, *Histoire du Bas-Empire*, vol. 2 (Amsterdam, 1968), p. 618, n. 1. P. Goubert, *Byzance avant l'Islam*, vol. 2.2: *Rome, Byzance et Carthage* (Paris, 1965), pp. 148–52, uses the evidence of Gregory's letters, but without reference to Rusticiana.

21. See A. Momigliano, "Cassiodorus and Italian Culture of His Time," *PBA* 41 (1956): 207–45; idem, "Gli Anicii e la storiografia latina del VI sec. d. C.," *Rendiconti Accademia dei Lincei, Classe di scienze morali, storiche e filologiche*, ser. 8, 11–12 (1956): 231–54 (both in *Secondo contributo alla storia degli studi classici* [Rome, 1960], pp. 191–254).

22. See Sundwall, *Abhandlungen*, p. 104. Despite E. R. Hardy, *The Large Estates of Byzantine Egypt* (New York, 1931), p. 37, further developed with detailed discussion of "Strategus and Apion II under Justinian" in idem, "The Egyptian Policy of Justinian," *J. of Egyptology* 42 (1968): 23–41, esp. p. 35 ("after two generations of prominence in the imperial court, the Apiones seem to have retired to its native province"), it is clear from Gregory's letters that the Apiones of the late sixth century spent a good part of their time in Constantinople.



the future pope, was there as *apocrisiarius* from 579 to 586; it must have been then that the two met and laid the foundations of the friendship that was to continue until the first years of the seventh century.<sup>23</sup>

Sundwall was surely right in identifying the Rusticana of our poem with this great lady.<sup>24</sup> During his years in Constantinople Gregory met a whole group of people with whom he continued to correspond after his return to Rome as pope. They included the empress herself, the emperor's sister, two ladies called Italica and Dominica, Leander of Seville, Anastasius the ex-patriarch of Antioch, and Cyriacus the future patriarch of Constantinople.<sup>25</sup> Given such a network, it is overwhelmingly likely that the two versions of our poem somehow reflect the close connection between Gregory and the younger Rusticana. Gregory wanted her to come to Rome in A.D. 598—he says he cannot understand her liking for Constantinople and her neglect of Rome<sup>26</sup>—but, though “everyone” wanted to see her again, she apparently did not return. In 601 Gregory thanked her for sending a gift of a pair of curtains to St. Peter's; they had not been installed with the exact ceremony she requested because Gregory was ill with gout, and the messenger (a Symmachus) bearing Rusticana's letter with full instructions had delayed it out of consideration for the pope's health.<sup>27</sup> In the same letter Gregory mentions another gift from Rusticana, to the monastery of St. Andrew. The last letter dates from February 603;<sup>28</sup> when he wrote it, Gregory evidently did not yet know of the murder of Maurice.<sup>29</sup> But in May he was writing an official letter to the new emperor Phocas,<sup>30</sup> and in June he wrote to Rusticana's daughter Eusebia, wife of Apion, urging her to forget the troubles of the *regia civitas* by keeping her mind on spiritual matters.<sup>31</sup> We might be tempted to suppose that Rusticana had suffered in the debacle that struck Maurice and his family, but this is unlikely, for in his letter to her daughter Gregory only mentions the general woes of the city and Eusebia's own concern for her possessions (*divitiae*). At any rate, after this we hear no more of Rusticana, and Gregory's correspondence ends in the following year.

It is not at all surprising that a lady such as Rusticana living in Constantinople might have commissioned a poem in Latin, or found a poet capable of writing it for her. As Gregory's letters show, Latin was still in

23. *Greg. Epist.* 2. 27 (A.D. 592), 4. 44 (594), 8. 22 (598), 11. 26 (601), 13. 26 (603).

24. *Abhandlungen*, p. 104.

25. Holmes Dudden, *Gregory the Great*, 1:154–55; Stein, *Histoire du Bas-Empire*, 2:618, nn. 1–2.

26. *Epist.* 8. 22.

27. *Epist.* 11. 26. Such was Rusticana's deferential attitude toward Gregory that in this letter he asks his old friend to refrain from calling herself his *ancilla*. Seven or eight years earlier (en-couraged by Gregory) she had been on a pilgrimage to Mt. Sinai (*Epist.* 2. 27, 4. 4). Later Rusti-ciana and Gregory were able to commiserate with each other when she, too, was afflicted with gout (*Epist.* 11. 26, 13. 26).

28. *Epist.* 13. 26.

29. Maurice and his sons were killed on November 26 or 27, 602: Theophylact 8. 113; *Chron. Pasch.*, 1:694 Bonn; Theophanes, p. 290 De Boor. See A. Stratos, *Byzantium in the Seventh Century*, vol. 1 (Amsterdam, 1968), p. 52; J. B. Bury, *History of the Later Roman Empire from Arcadius to Irene (395 A.D. to 800 A.D.)*, vol. 2 (London, 1889), pp. 91–92.

30. *Epist.* 13. 34.

31. *Epist.* 13. 35.

regular use not only in the imperial bureaus, but also for communication between members of the upper classes, not all of them Westerners.<sup>32</sup> The fact that Gregory's knowledge of Greek continues to be disputed at least shows that there were still many in Constantinople who understood Latin.<sup>33</sup> Rusticana had children and grandchildren living in Constantinople, frequent recipients of Gregory's good wishes and prayers,<sup>34</sup> and apparently still had friends and members of her family in Rome.<sup>35</sup> Quite apart from these personal connections, it is becoming clear that in general there was more Latin surviving in Constantinople even at the end of the sixth century than is commonly supposed, and there must certainly still have been some professional poets or rhetoricians capable of composing Latin works to order.<sup>36</sup> I suggest, therefore, that our poem was commissioned by Rusticana for her own purposes, probably to inscribe on or beside some picture which she set up herself; subsequently, perhaps, she gave this picture to Gregory, who took it to Rome, where the epigram was freshly inscribed, either in Gregory's house or elsewhere, but with a suitably (and not very skillfully) altered ending. It is possible that the poem could have been composed in Rome before Rusticana moved to the East, but it is *prima facie* much more likely that it belongs to the period of her residence in Constantinople. I shall argue that the content and style of the poem very much supports such an Eastern context. Fuller consideration of Corippus' panegyric on Justin II has revealed how completely the Latin language could be made a vehicle for sentiments and subject matter belonging wholly to Constantinople,<sup>37</sup> and I would suggest that in this poem we have another example of the continued use of Latin. But if our poem is basically an Eastern poem, we must be very cautious about using it to illustrate the development of Marian imagery or iconography in the West.

Despite lines 1–14, this poem is not, in its total effect, about the Virgin, even though the first half does, as we shall see, contain imagery and language parallel to other contemporary Marian texts. At line 15, the writer

32. E.g., *Epist.* 1. 4 (to the patriarch John of Constantinople), 1. 5 (to Theoctista, the sister of Maurice), 1. 7 (to Anastasius of Antioch)—merely a random sample.

33. Recently, J. M. Peterson, “Did Gregory the Great Know Greek?” *Studies in Church History* 13 (1976): 121–34.

34. Her daughter, Eusebia, married Apion III; she also had a son, Eudoxius, whose wife was called Gregoria. Eusebia and Apion III had daughters (unnamed) and the son Strategius, frequently mentioned by Gregory. All of these people seem to have been living in Constantinople; see *Epist.* 4. 44, 11. 26, 13. 26, 13. 35. *PLRE* 3 will eventually make it possible to demonstrate the deep penetration of the aristocracy of Constantinople by Westerners, at the end of the sixth century no less than at the beginning. Rusticana and her family were, after all, related to the descendants of the great Anicia Juliana, who intermarried not merely with the surviving line of the Emperor Anastasius but also with the imperial family in the reigns of Justinian and Justin II. See Alan Cameron, “The House of Anastasius,” *GRBS* 19 (1978): 259–76.

35. Perhaps the Symmachus mentioned in *Epist.* 11. 26 was her brother. See also *Epist.* 8. 22.

36. Coripp. *Iust.* 4. 154 mentions Latin panegyric as still normal. Latin in Constantinople: I. Ševčenko, “A Late Antique Epigram and the Is-Caled Elder M-istrate from the 6th c.,” *Synthronon. Bibliothèque des cahiers archéologiques* (1968): 32–33; G. J. Lagron, “Aux origines de la civilisation byzantine: langue de culture et langue d'état,” *Rev. hist.* 241 (1967): 23–36. A series of Western ambassadors were present in Constantinople throughout the sixth century.

37. See my edition (with commentary and translation), *In laudem Iustini Augusti minoris, libri IV* (London, 1976).



leaves the Virgin and concentrates on her Son. The theme of the second half of the poem is actually Christ incarnate, and the prayer with which it ends is a prayer, not to the Virgin, but to Christ. De Rossi's supposition that it accompanied a picture of the Virgin and Child at least gives due weight to both halves of the poem, and it is well known that not until the very end of the sixth century do we even begin to find representations of the Virgin alone.<sup>38</sup> But I would suggest a different explanation. *Hac luce* in the first line gives a clue: why "this day"? Such a use of *hac* is typical of ekphrastic poetry, where the poet's aim is to invoke a visual scene with the most vivid language possible. He will point out individual elements in the picture, as though the reader is standing before it himself.<sup>39</sup> The effect is complete if the ekphrastic poem is inscribed beside or upon the work of art it describes.<sup>40</sup> Since the Gregory version of our poem appears in a collection of inscriptions preserved in manuscript but taken from their original sites, we can say that this second version was written up beside its subject, though it was clearly soon copied into book collections. As for the original poem, written for Rusticiana in Constantinople, we have no way of knowing whether it was inscribed on a wall or panel for her, too, or simply composed as an ekphrastic poem. That version, if it was inscribed, was evidently also copied out either then or later into manuscript, where it was attributed (at an unknown date) to Andreas orator. But whether inscribed or not, our poem is clearly ekphrastic: take, for example, the language of lines 11-12, with the vivid use of *adfulsit* of the birth of Christ. Then in line 14 the poet addresses the subject of the picture;<sup>41</sup> then we have *haec* in 16 and *huic* in 17.<sup>42</sup> *Sic voluit nasci* (21) gives us the answer, if we still need it: this is a poem about a Nativity scene. The ekphrastic pointers bring out the moment in time which the scene represents—the very birth of Christ, as indeed the scribe of the Trinity College MS or his model realized in heading the poem *In natalem diem Christi*. If the poem was inscribed on a wall in Rome, objects such as gems or medallions, which we know to have had Nativity scenes during this period,<sup>43</sup> are ruled out. But

38. Perhaps first in the Rabbula Gospels (A.D. 586); see G. A. Wellen, "Das Marienbild der frühchristlichen Kunst," in *Lexikon der christlichen Ikonographie, allgemeine Ikonographie*, vol. 3 (Freiburg, 1971), s.v. "Maria" (p. 159).

39. For the manner of Byzantine ekphrasis, see H. Maguire, "Truth and Convention in Byzantine Works of Art," *DOP* 28 (1974): 113-40; C. Mango, "Antique Statuary and the Byzantine Beholder," *DOP* 17 (1963): 65-66; G. Downey, s.v. "Ekphrasis," *RAC* 4 (1959): 921-44; C. Mango, *The Homilies of Photius* (Cambridge, Mass., 1958), p. 290; C. Mango and E. J. W. Hawkins, "The Apse Mosaics of St. Sophia at Istanbul," *DOP* 19 (1965): 115-48, 142-43.

40. The first poem of Merobaudes, describing a mosaic of the imperial family, provides a good comparison. See F. M. Clover, *Flavius Merobaudes. A Translation and Historical Commentary*, Transactions of the American Philosophical Society, vol. 61, pt. 1 (Philadelphia, 1971), pp. 16-17, 18, n. 28 (deictic pronouns). There are many problems associated with this poem; see recently T. D. Barnes, "Merobaudes on the Imperial Family," *Phoenix* 29 (1974): 314-19. But even ekphrastic poems inscribed alongside the works they described did not always describe the works realistically; see Maguire, "Truth and Convention," pp. 113-40.

41. As commonly in ekphrastic poems; cf. Merobaudes *Carm.* 1. 23 *o felix*. . . For *topoi* of realism in ekphrasis, see Maguire, "Truth and Convention," pp. 125-26.

42. Cf. Merobaudes *Carm.* 1. 11 *hic ubi*. . . 1. 17 *hac de prole*. . . 1. 19 *en*. . . *iam*, 1. 21 *putares*. . .

43. As, for example, the splendid late sixth-century gold encolpium at Dumbarton Oaks, perhaps struck for the baptism of the Emperor Maurice's son Theodosius in A.D. 584 (M. Ross, *Cata-*

it could well have accompanied a painted panel or conceivably even an ivory. Whatever the exact object, I would suggest that the younger Rusticiana in Constantinople may well have sent it as a Christmas gift to her friend Gregory, together with a copy of the poem describing it, which Gregory in turn caused to be inscribed in his house.

The poet's treatment of the subject still needs comment, however. For, despite his ekphrastic demonstratives, the poet does not describe the scene pictorially. There are no shepherds, no animals, no baby.<sup>44</sup> On the contrary, the treatment is doctrinal. The poem divides into two sections, the first focusing on the Virgin, the second on the Child, and in each the entire emphasis is on the theological implications of the Incarnation. At the close of the poem the emphasis is on the Child, who is the recipient of the poet's prayer to bless the family of the donor or patron. The naming of Rusticiana/Gregory is the literary equivalent of the portrayal of the donor in contemporary donor mosaics, but it is the Child, in His full theological realization, who will bless them. This recalls the doctrinal implications of the apse mosaics of the sixth century which portray an enthroned Virgin with the Child on her lap; there, too, the focus is on the Child, and the Virgin's role is that of the "vessel of the Incarnation," so that she is less there in her own right than as the way by which Christ was able to come into the world. Closer examination of our poem will make this point even more clearly. In the first fourteen lines, we have a miniature exposition of the theological significance of the Virgin. In lines 7-10, and even in lines 11-14, there is less focus on the Virgin than on the Father and the Son. In the parts that do especially concern the Virgin, two things are emphasized: first, her submission, which is the type of faith (*nescia, obtulit, fides, credidit*) and, second, the paradox of the birth (2 *gnara*. . . *nescia*, 5-6 *credidit et tumult*. . . *clausurunt magnum parvula membra deum*). Thus the Virgin's function is as instrument; she is not accredited with any personal qualities but appears only in a symbolic role. The poem fits perfectly into the context of the development of Marian cult and literature in the late sixth century. It belongs to a time when the later characteristic aspects of the Virgin were as yet present in only the most rudimentary forms, if at all, a time when her chief representation was still basically doctrinal, as one of the central elements in the demonstration of orthodoxy. The large number of churches dedicated to the Virgin which Justinian erected in outlying or wavering

*logue of the Byzantine and Early Medieval Antiquities in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection*, vol. 2 [Washington, D.C., 1965], no. 36). A seventh-century marriage ring also at Dumbarton Oaks carries a Nativity scene (no. 47.15), and the theme was common on objects such as pyxides and censers, and also on ampullae from the Holy Land of the late sixth and early seventh centuries. One might think of an ivory diptych, bearing in mind the five-part diptych of which the central part, with Nativity scene, is in the John Rylands University Library, Victoria University, Manchester. But if the epigram really was inscribed on a wall, and the picture in question transported from Constantinople to Rome, we should have to envisage a portable image, in form of a sculpture about the iconography of such an image is tempting, though there is little to help us; on the basis of the John Rylands diptych, however, and others of the object, it could well have depicted an enthroned Virgin holding the Child, with a miniature Nativity representation below.

44. For other ekphrasis of Nativity scenes, cf. Maguire, "Truth and Convention," pp. 116, 118, 136.



parts of the empire as well as in major cities had exactly this function—to reinforce orthodoxy, not to boost the cult of the Virgin as such.<sup>45</sup> Justin II was also primarily concerned with the definition of orthodox belief.<sup>46</sup> When he sent a piece of the True Cross to Poitiers, his action was represented by the poet Venantius Fortunatus as illustrative of the concern for orthodoxy which the new emperor had evinced already in other actions.<sup>47</sup> The Cross of Justin II, now in the Vatican, shows Justin and his empress Sophia in a composition indicative of Trinitarian symbolism, with the Lamb of God in the center of the Cross.<sup>48</sup> When the poet Corippus wished to compliment Justin's order inserting the Creed of Constantinople into the liturgy of all churches, he did so by an elaborate evocation of Trinitarian symbolism,<sup>49</sup> followed by a paraphrase of the Creed itself. Our poem fits very well, therefore, into such a context.

It so happens that it was the Emperor Maurice, whose court was the meeting place for Gregory and Rusticana, who made the Dormition of the Virgin into an official feast,<sup>50</sup> certainly an important step in the process leading to the spectacular recognition of the Virgin as savior and future protectress of the city of Constantinople during and after the siege of the city in A.D. 626.<sup>51</sup> But that recognition, and the enormous efflorescence of Marian devotion and Marian hymnography and homiletic which it produced, was still in the future when our poem was composed. We can, however, find still other parallels from the later sixth century for our poem's treatment of the theme. Undoubtedly there are earlier parallels in Western Latin poetry for the wordplays used in the first part of the poem, notably in Merobaudes' *De Christo* and the *De Salvatore* attributed to Claudian.<sup>52</sup> But the closest parallels, totally understandable if the poem was written in Constantinople, come from the prayer to the Virgin included in Corippus'

45. E.g., Procop. *Aed.* 6. 2. 20. Procopius tells us that Justinian himself wished the churches of the Theotokos to be given priority in the panegyric (*Aed.* 1. 3. 1). Other churches of the Virgin built by Justinian: *Aed.* 2. 10. 24, 3. 4. 12, 5. 6. 1, 5. 7. 5, 5. 9. 23, 6. 4. 4, 6. 5. 9, 6. 7. 16. The great church of the Virgin in Jerusalem (the Nea—*Aed.* 5. 6. 1) has now been discovered; see N. Avigad, "A Building Inscription of the Emperor Justinian and the Nea in Jerusalem," *Israel Exploration Journal* 27 (1977): 145–51. In Justinian's theological writings the Virgin plays the same role; cf. E. Schwartz, *Drei dogmatische Schriften Justinians*<sup>2</sup>, ed. M. Amelotti, R. Albertella, and L. Migliardi (Milan, 1973), pp. 16, 96–97, 114.

46. See Averil Cameron, "The Early Religious Policies of Justin II," *Studies in Church History* 13 (1976): 51–67; A. de Halleux, "Trois synodes impériaux du VI<sup>e</sup> siècle dans une chronique syriaque inédite," in *A Tribute to Arthur Voobus*, ed. R. H. Fischer (Chicago, 1977), pp. 302 ff. (I owe this reference to Professor H. J. W. Drijvers).

47. *Ad Iustinum et Sophiam Augustos* (MGH: AA, 4: 275–78).

48. J. Beckwith, *The Art of Constantinople*<sup>2</sup> (London, 1968), pl. 55. See A. Grabar, *L'iconoclasme byzantin* (Paris, 1957), pp. 19, 25.

49. *Iust.* 4. 292–93. Creed: 4. 299–311.

50. Niceph. Call. *HE* 17. 28.

51. For this process, see Averil Cameron, "The Cult of the Theotokos in Sixth-Century Constantinople: A City Finds Its Symbol," *JTS*, n.s. 29 (1978): 79–108; N. Baynes, "The Supernatural Defenders of Constantinople," *Analecta Bollandiana* 67 (1949): 165–77 (= *Byzantine Studies and Other Essays* [London, 1955], pp. 248–60); S. McCormack, "Roma, Constantinopolis, the Emperor," *CQ* 25 (1975): 149.

52. For the authenticity of the *De Salvatore* (Claud. *Carm. min.* 32), see W. Schmid, s.v. "Claudianus" 1, *RAC* 3 (1957): 158–59. For Merobaudes, see S. Gennaro, *Da Claudiano a Merobaudes* (Catania, 1959). T. Birt cites earlier parallels (MGH: AA, 10: 330).

Latin panegyric for Justin II, composed in Constantinople in 566.<sup>53</sup> There is the same emphasis on Mary as the type of faith, the same paradoxes, the same vocabulary. In line 13, our poet picks up Corippus' *gloria matrum*,<sup>54</sup> and, in line 5, the conception of the Word *pro semine* (associated also with faith—*credula*). Both use the famous and much quoted phrase from Philipians 2: 7 (*μορφὴν δούλου λαβών*).<sup>55</sup> Nine lines from Corippus are in point:

Virgo, creatoris genetrix sanctissima mundi,  
excelsi regina poli, specialiter una  
vera parens et virgo manens, sine semine patris  
quam deus elegit matrem sibi, credula verbum  
concipiens nostram genuisti feta salutem.  
o pietas miranda dei dictuque tremenda!  
cadorum factor dominus deus, unica patris  
forma dei, verae sese velamine carnis  
induit, et servi formam de virgine sumpsit.<sup>56</sup>

I have italicized the words and phrases recalled by our poem. Now the background for Corippus' phraseology, as I have tried to show elsewhere,<sup>57</sup> is Greek and contemporary—the Greek hymns and homilies on the Virgin current in Constantinople in the sixth century. The present poem has the same background, and its writer must have been as much influenced as Corippus by the *kontakia* of Romanos and others; like Corippus, our poet writes in Latin, in his case for Latin-speaking patrons, but he draws on the theology and imagery of the Eastern capital in which he lived.

It is hard to find Western poems of the same period which will provide similar parallels,<sup>58</sup> but there is one major poem which offers itself for comparison, namely, the *In laudem Mariae* attributed to Venantius Fortunatus.<sup>59</sup> This is a long poem (360 lines), which from a very early date was included with the poems of Venantius; it has certain infelicities which have led some scholars to be very sure that it is not authentic.<sup>60</sup> My own view is that it probably is by Venantius, and belongs to the 590s;<sup>61</sup> even if it was not written by Venantius, it could hardly be dated much later. Some linguistic similarities have been detected between this poem and the Corippus passage just quoted, though they are not as close as those between Corippus and our poem.<sup>62</sup> The interest of the *In laudem Mariae* for the present study,

53. For fuller discussion of this passage, see Cameron, "Cult of the Theotokos," pp. 82–85.

54. *Iust.* 2. 62; cf. Proclus of Constantinople, *PG*, 65:680.

55. This was a text expounded in favor of Chalcedon by Justinian; see Schwartz, *Drei dogmatische Schriften Justinians*, pp. 16, 96.

56. *Iust.* 2. 52–60; for full discussion, see my commentary, pp. 152–54.

57. "Cult of the Theotokos," pp. 86–87.

58. The fourth-century Latin poem on a Barcelona papyrus, supposed formerly to be a poem about the Virgin, is rather about God the Father, and in any case not at all similar; see A. Emmett, "The Subject of Psalmus Responsorius: P. Barc. 149b–153," *Museum Philologicum Londinense* 2 (1977): 99–109. Nor is the hymn to the Virgin by Anodius (Carm. 1. 19 *In honorem Mariae*), except in some inescapable details.

59. Ed. Leo, *MGH: AA*, 4: 371–80.

60. *Ibid.*, p. xxiv.

61. "Cult of the Theotokos," pp. 91–96.

62. M. Manitius, "Zu spätlateinischen Dichtern," *Z. öst. Gym.* 37 (1886): 250–54.



however, is that, although it is a poem about the Virgin, one of its themes is the association of the Virgin with the definition of orthodoxy—exactly as we have it in our inscriptional poem, but on a bigger scale and with a more literary treatment.<sup>63</sup> There are many places in the *In laudem Mariae* where the poet uses the same terminology and ideas of the Virgin as we find both in Corippus and here,<sup>64</sup> but for our purposes the emphasis on Mary as a means to defining orthodoxy gives an excellent context for our poem.

In treating the theme of the Nativity in such a depersonalized and theological manner, our unknown poet has given us not only a small but precious addition to the collection of evidence illustrating the growing cult of the Virgin at the end of the sixth century, but also, and perhaps more pertinent for the circumstances in which he was writing, a document of complete Chalcedonian orthodoxy. The Virgin gave birth to "God and man" together (1); Christ had a *duplex substantia* (15); the Trinity is in existence *sine fine* (17). For *triplicitas simplex simplicitasque triplex* (18) we may again compare Venantius, this time the poem of thanks which he wrote to Justin II when the emperor sent his gift to Poitiers: *persona triplex, substantia simplex* (3). *Triplicitas* in our poem may be the first use of the word—it is the only example cited by Du Cange—but compare Sedulius *Carmen Paschale* 1. 298, also of the Trinity, "quod simplex triplicet quodque est triplicabile simplex." Again Venantius *Carmen* 5. 5. 41–42: "est deus, alta fides, unus trinus et trinus unus: / personis propriis stat tribus unus apex." The notion of *bis genitus* in line 19 is very striking, but again we have similar (though indeed not exactly parallel) plays of "mother" and "father" in, for example, Venantius *In laudem Mariae* 37–38. There, too, the idea that the Son became *minor* through his Incarnation is expressed (line 20 in our poem). Finally, our poet ends this section with a play on the idea of redemption, a theme which is found both in Corippus' Trinitarian section and in Venantius.<sup>65</sup>

So we have it: a small contribution to the corpus of sixth-century *ekphra-seis*, to our sense of the developing cult of the Virgin, to our knowledge of contacts between the upper classes, both lay and ecclesiastical, of Rome and Constantinople. The culture of late sixth-century Constantinople is in urgent need of investigation, and texts like this, especially those without a direct imperial connection, will have a large part to play.

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63. Cf. *In laudem Mariae* 29–30, 251–52. Note 47 "sed redeo qua virgo trahit mihi laude canenda"; the Trinitarian material here is a conscious artistic digression.

64. E.g., 43 *induit artus*, 46 *formam servi*, 122 *conspiciente fide*, 203 *vincens super omnia matres*, 210 *hospitium vitae*, 248–49 *in scia coniugio feta negante viro*. / *accipis et nascis*.

65. *Iust.* 4. 298, 4. 307–8; *In laudem Mariae* 123–24.

## THE BYZANTINE SOURCES OF GREGORY OF TOURS

It has long been noted that certain passages in Gregory's *History of the Franks* show knowledge of Byzantine affairs. In the past they have been generally dismissed as trivial or merely inexact.<sup>1</sup> More recently they have been taken to show that Gregory's conception of Eastern Roman kingship could correspond to an ideal sadly missed by the Merovingians.<sup>2</sup> That may be true, though his remarks about Justin II<sup>3</sup> show that he had no unified idea of Byzantine emperors. But I should like to argue rather that these passages show a striking similarity with certain remarks in eastern sources, that Gregory's eastern information is thus better than usually supposed, and that we can accordingly trust him when he is our sole informant.

It is usual to assume that Gregory derived his eastern information at best from ambassadors, though it is by no means clear which ambassadors he might have met or where he met them.<sup>4</sup> But in fact Gregory's passages correspond closely with a group of Byzantine sources, so closely in fact that some sort of access to written material cannot be

<sup>1</sup> HF iv. 40 (= Paulus Diaconus, *HL* iii. 11); v. 19, 30 (= Paulus Diac., iii. 11–12); vi. 30 (= Paulus Diac., ii. 15). Cf. G. Monod, *Études critiques sur les sources de l'histoire mérovingienne*, pt. i (= *Bibliothèque de l'école des hautes études*, 8, Paris, 1872), p. 108 'inexact'; G. F. Kurth, 'De l'autorité de Grégoire de Tours', *Études franques*, ii (1919), pp. 167 f. 'anecdotes . . .', 'historiettes'.

<sup>2</sup> J. M. Wallace-Hadrill, *Frühmittelalterlichen Studien*, ii (1960), p. 3.

<sup>3</sup> HF iv. 40.

<sup>4</sup> Kurth, op. cit., p. 167; for an account of Merovingian-Byzantine relations in the reign of Maurice (582–602) see P. Goubert, *Byzance avant l'Islam*, ii. 1: *Byzance et les Francs* (Paris, 1956).



ruled out.<sup>1</sup> It is striking, firstly, that the passages in question concern Justin II and Tiberius II, the one presented with extreme hostility, the other extremely favourably. Now contemporary Byzantine sources show the same bias in both directions. These sources are Evagrius, whose *Ecclesiastical History* goes up to the year 593 and who is thus an exact contemporary of Gregory (d. 594), and the Syriac writer John of Ephesus, who also wrote an *Ecclesiastical History*, the latest parts of which were written in 585,<sup>2</sup> and who not only lived in Constantinople but was an intimate friend of the emperor Tiberius.<sup>3</sup> John's work is based like much of Gregory's on personal knowledge and is of the highest value as a contemporary source.

Let us take first the hostility to Justin II (565-578). Gregory writes:<sup>4</sup>

He was a man wholly abandoned to avarice, a despiser of the poor and despoiler of his senators; such was his cupidity that he caused iron coffers to be made, in which he piled gold pieces by the talent.

With this compare Evagrius:<sup>5</sup>

he was completely undisciplined in his way of life, simply wallowing in luxury and strange pleasures, an ardent lover of other people's money so that he was willing to sell anything for the sake of lawless gain, not even fearing God in the matter of priestships, which he sold to all comers, putting these openly up for sale.

Or cf. John of Ephesus:<sup>6</sup>

On his becoming king, he [*sc.* Tiberius] found large sums of gold secretly hoarded there, which his predecessor [*sc.* Justin] had gathered by unjust means . . .

The hostility of John of Ephesus is easily accounted for; Justin was a persecutor of Monophysites, the sect to which John belonged, and John could not forgive him his religious policies.<sup>7</sup> Evagrius however was orthodox; yet his hostility to Justin was no less,<sup>8</sup> and Gregory has clearly picked up something of the same.

<sup>1</sup> So e.g. Wattenbach-Levison, *Deutschlands Geschichtsquellen im Mittelalter*, 3 (1952), p. 103.

<sup>2</sup> E. W. Brooks, in *CSCO script. syri.* 3. 3 (1936), III.

<sup>3</sup> *HE* iii. 22. There is a convenient and generally accurate translation by R. Payne-Smith, *The Third Part of the Ecclesiastical History of John Bishop of Ephesus* (Oxford, 1860).

<sup>4</sup> *HE* v. 1.

<sup>5</sup> *HE* v. 20, cf. iii. 11, 22.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. e.g. *HE* iii. 1 for John's view of Justin's reign; he began well, but lapsed into unforgivable persecution, which brought down upon him the punishment of God in the guise of madness. The persecution of Monophysites was in large measure due to the wicked influence over the king of John Scholasticus, the orthodox patriarch, and Anastasius the quaestor, both of whom were equally punished by God—*HE* ii. 25 f.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. *HE* v. 2 on the murder of Justin son of Germanus and cf. e.g. v. 11.

More striking than the hostility of these writers to Justin is their extreme favour towards his successor Tiberius II. So Evagrius:<sup>1</sup>

Tiberius was very tall and exceedingly handsome, more than one would have supposed, not only for a king, but even compared with all men. So first of all he was worthy of the empire because of his appearance. And in his nature he was gentle and charitable (*φιλόανθρωπος*), greeting everyone immediately on seeing them, thinking it wealth to give largess to all not merely according to their need but even in excess. For he did not merely consider what the seekers ought to have, but also what was fitting for a Roman emperor to give; and he thought counterfeit the gold which was arrived at by tears.

John of Ephesus has this to say:<sup>2</sup>

And now that he [*sc.* Tiberius] has been thought worthy of being elevated to his present royal dignity, we assure all those who are not eye-witnesses of it, that he continues to practise the same frankness and humility as of old, without being changed or filled with pride, as so young a man might be by the possession of royal power. Nor will he permit anyone to be put to death, or plundered of his property, as was the practice of his predecessor, who stained himself and his hands with innocent blood; but up to this present time, which is the third year of his reign [*i.e.* A.D. 581], besides the four during which he was Caesar, he conducts himself with nobleness and humility, although many find fault with him as being too quiet and humble and inspiring no fear; but in spite of their representations, he still continues his gentleness of demeanour up to this present time.

And now Gregory. First iv. 40:

Tiberius, a just man and charitable (*elimosinarium*), discerning equity, successful in war and rich in that which surpasses all other goods, the truest Christian faith.

Then v. 19:

Tiberius . . . a man strenuous and helpful, wise, charitable (*aelimosinarium*), and the best defender of the poor. He gave great largess to the needy of the treasures which Justin had amassed, and the empress would often rebuke him for reducing the state to poverty, saying 'What I have brought together in many years thou in short space dost squander' . . .

For the empress Sophia's remonstrances compare John of Ephesus again,<sup>3</sup> who says that during Justin's lifetime, when Tiberius was Caesar (574-8), Justin and Sophia 'scolded him sharply' for his largess and 'finally took from him the keys of the treasury and set up a fixed sum

<sup>1</sup> *HE* v. 13.

<sup>2</sup> *HE* iii. 22, cf. iii. 15, but contrast v. 20, where Tiberius is criticized for prodigality.

<sup>3</sup> *HE* iii. 11



with a *fait accompli*. The presence of the patriarch and the fact that Tiberius went first to St. Sophia are yet further guarantees of Gregory's accuracy; emperors were not yet crowned in St. Sophia (that did not happen until the seventh century) but Tiberius' move to the church was already as instinctive as the prayers of Justin and Sophia before the previous inauguration.<sup>1</sup> Further, Gregory puts an entirely contemporary emphasis on the religious aspect of Tiberius' position—he was a man who put his trust in God and was thus inviolable.<sup>2</sup>

Gregory tells us that the *factionarii* who were behind the plot were confounded and consequently dispersed. Who were they and what was their aim? In earlier Latin usage *factionarii* meant the leaders of the circus factions, but by Gregory's date it was in Byzantine usage (no doubt unknown to Gregory) applied to the top charioteers. Here Gregory seems to mean the faction members in general;<sup>3</sup> his words suggest a whole group rather than individuals. That the factions should be involved in acclaiming new emperors can again be paralleled from the inauguration of Justin II.<sup>4</sup> Gregory's statement here is a welcome addition to the signs that the factions were already taking part in imperial ceremonial before the end of the sixth century.<sup>5</sup> The aims of the faction members can perhaps be guessed at. They could hardly remove a crowned emperor. But they could hope to force him to adopt Justinian as co-Augustus, and it seems very likely that this was indeed their hope. In practice Tiberius confuted them, and as Gregory says they dispersed. Three days later Justinian threw himself on Tiberius' mercy and was treated kindly and offered space to stay in the palace.

This plot was followed by another, also in favour of Justinian, this time laid by the empress Sophia. But again Tiberius was informed, and hastily returned to Constantinople from the countryside where he had been present at the vintage. He deprived Sophia of everything except a bare livelihood and appointed guards to watch over her. Again Justinian was merely rebuked, and later held in high favour, even promised marriage ties between the emperor's son and daughter and his own children.

I would not venture to suggest what Gregory's Byzantine source might have been, though a written chronicle source does not seem to me to be ruled out. Certainly we owe to him valuable information about Tiberius II and we must for the future cease thinking of his Byzantine passages as merely inexact or in any way trivial.

<sup>1</sup> Corippus, op. cit., ii. 1 f.

<sup>2</sup> v. 30 'he who had placed all his hope in God had no fear of any adversaries.'

<sup>3</sup> Certainly not 'conspirators' as Dalton and others, including even Stein, *RE* x. 1313, s.v. Iustinianus (2).

<sup>4</sup> See Alan Cameron, *Circus Factions* (1975), ch. ix, and for *factionarii*, *ibid.*, ch. i.

<sup>5</sup> Corippus, op. cit., ii. 310.

## THE THEOTOKOS IN SIXTH-CENTURY CONSTANTINOPLE

### A CITY FINDS ITS SYMBOL<sup>1</sup>

MARY, the holy Virgin, the Theotokos.<sup>2</sup> The myth and cult of the Virgin Mary and the implications they may or may not carry about the nature of a society in which they are particularly honoured form a subject of central importance, yet one that has been strangely neglected by historians and sociologists of religion. Predictably, there is a voluminous literature centring on the history and interpretation of Marian doctrine,<sup>3</sup> yet the cult has received very little serious attention of a non-partisan nature. Two popular books on the subject have recently appeared, illustrating the state of affairs very well, for one<sup>4</sup> focuses on the cult from the point of view of feminism, while the other<sup>5</sup> demonstrates the author's personal involvement throughout, and represents an avowed (but ultimately unsuccessful) attempt to counteract the subtle manipulation of a contemporary convent upbringing. Both books make plain the prime necessity for more detailed historical information at certain crucial periods. One of those periods is late sixth-century Constantinople, where a distinctive development in the cult of the Virgin was certainly taking place. By A.D. 626, the climactic year of the great siege of the city by the Avars and the Persians, the Virgin has emerged as the special protectress of Constantinople; her icon saves the people; she herself, they knew, had

<sup>1</sup> I am particularly grateful to Dr. Janet L. Nelson for friendly discussion and detailed criticism.

<sup>2</sup> Syriac chronicle of A.D. 569, ed. F. J. Hamilton and E. W. Brooks (London, 1899), p. 254.

<sup>3</sup> Out of the vast bulk of Marian literature the works I have found most useful are M. Jugie, *La Mort et l'Assomption de la Sainte Vierge*, *Studi e Testi*, cxiv (Rome, 1944), and H. Graef, *Mary: A History of Doctrine and Devotion*, i (London and New York, 1963), a far less substantial work though covering more ground. Much relevant material may be found in G. A. Wellen, *Theotokos: eine ikonographische Abhandlung über das Gottesmutterbild im frühchristlichen Zeit* (Utrecht/Amsterdam, 1961).

<sup>4</sup> G. Ashe, *The Virgin* (London, 1976), confessedly not intended to be taken as a scholarly thesis.

<sup>5</sup> M. Warner, *Alone of all her Sex: The Myth and Cult of the Virgin Mary* (London, 1976). Warner's book is fundamentally important, but is unfortunately flawed by many errors; see R.W. Pfaff, *Church History* lvi (1977), pp. 234 f. See also the review-article discussing both these works by Janet L. Nelson in *Religion* vii (1977), pp. 90–109, with which I am in substantial agreement.



fought alongside them in the battle before the very walls of her church at Blachernae; henceforth her own hymn, the Akathistos, is adopted as the city's special hymn of thanksgiving to one whom the inhabitants now clearly envisage as their own special mediator.<sup>1</sup> This devotion to the Virgin was not in itself new; it had been steadily growing since the Council of Ephesus, and the Virgin's influence could be measured in part by the multitude of churches in her honour which existed in the city by the mid-sixth century.<sup>2</sup> Yet we miss in the writers of the middle of the century that personal commitment to the Virgin which is so overwhelming in the records of the year 626; the first writer to give expression to the idea that Constantinople was specially guarded by God was Corippus, writing in the year 566,<sup>3</sup> and even then there is no sign of the idea that became universal later, that it was the Theotokos herself in whose protection the city lay. Between the middle of the century, then, and the crisis of the year 626, the Virgin came to assume a dominant—perhaps the dominant—place in the religious life of the city. How and why that happened is the subject of this paper.

The rise of the Virgin's cult to this prominence is a far from isolated phenomenon in these years. It cannot, for instance, be separated from the growth in the cult of icons, which has received more, but hardly final, attention.<sup>4</sup> Neither, in turn, can be appreciated without also taking

<sup>1</sup> See for A.D. 626 A. Frolov, 'La dédicace de Constantinople dans la tradition byzantine', *Revue de l'hist. des religions*, 127 (1944), pp. 61 ff.; F. Barišić, 'Le siège de Constantinople par les Avars et les Slaves en 626', *Byzantion*, xxiv (1954), pp. 373 ff.; P. Brown, 'A Dark-Age Crisis: Aspects of the Iconoclastic Controversy', *EHR* cccxvi (1973), pp. 1 ff.; S. MacCormack, 'Roma, Constantinopolis, the Emperor', *CQ* xxv (1975), pp. 131 ff., esp. 149; S. Spain Alexander, 'Heraclius, Byzantine Imperial Ideology and the David Plates', *Speculum*, lii (1977), pp. 217–37, esp. 223. On the protection of the city, cf. N. Baynes, 'The Supernatural Defenders of Constantinople', *Byzantine Studies* (London, 1955), pp. 248 ff. The poet of the triumphant Theotokos is George of Pisidia (p. 97 n. 5 below). For the Akathistos, equipped with a new preface for the all-night vigil of 7 August 626 to celebrate the deliverance of the city, see E. Wellesz, 'The Akathistos', *DOP*, ix–x (1955–6), pp. 143 ff.; C. A. Trypanis, *Fourteen Early Byzantine Cantica*, *Wiener byz. Studien*, v (1968), pp. 17 ff.

<sup>2</sup> R. Janin, *La Géographie ecclésiastique de l'empire byzantin III. i: les églises et les monastères*, 2nd edn. (Paris, 1969), pp. 156 ff.

<sup>3</sup> Corippus, *Iust.* III. 333, 'res Romana dei est, terrenis non eget armis.' See N. Baynes, *Byzantine Studies*, pp. 32, 58, 249 f.

<sup>4</sup> N. Baynes, 'The Icons before Iconoclasm', *HThR* xlv (1951), pp. 93 ff.; E. Kitzinger, 'The Cult of Images in the Period before Iconoclasm', *DOP* 8 (1954), pp. 83 ff.; P. Brown, *EHR* cccxvi (1973), pp. 1 ff.; S. Gero, 'Notes on Byzantine Iconoclasm in the eighth century', *Byzantion*, xlv (1974), pp. 23 ff., esp. 38 f.; P. Henry, 'What was the Iconoclast Controversy about?', *Church History*, 45 (1976), pp. 16 ff.; P. Brown, 'Eastern and Western Christendom in Late Antiquity: a parting of the ways', *Studies in Church History*, 13 (1976), pp. 1 ff., esp. 15.

## THE THEOTOKOS

into account what has been called the 'liturgification' of Byzantine society<sup>1</sup> (for they are part of it), the process whereby the old classical survivals lose ground to a uniformly religious approach to life, whether it be in imperial ceremonial, literature, or art,<sup>2</sup> and whereby the emperor gradually sheds the traditional Roman attributes to emerge fully as the *philochristos basileus*, the Melchisedech of the Ravenna mosaics.<sup>3</sup> The Roman triumph, revived once and once only, for Belisarius' victory over the Vandals,<sup>4</sup> gives way to the Byzantine *adventus*;<sup>5</sup> the Blues and Greens are harnessed into the service of the imperial ceremonial.<sup>6</sup> But behind these changes in the appearance and atmosphere of Byzantine life was a slow adaptation to political reality; the Western ambitions and grandiose plans of Justinian's earlier years had turned sour, in the face of disastrous plague, conspiracies, shortage of money, a weakened and dispirited army, and finally the emperor's own lapse into heresy.<sup>7</sup> Justinian's successors acted out for a time the same kind of ambitious foreign policy, but times were harder and hopes less high. It was increasingly possible for tendencies which had already been present even in Justinian's day to develop more fully, as the still surviving classical (and secular) elements in society lost their prestige. It was not, in simple

<sup>1</sup> O. Treitinger, *Die oströmische Kaiser- und Reichsidee vom oströmischen Staats- und Reichsgedanken*, 2nd edn. (Darmstadt, 1956), 27; see the suggestive summary by Janet L. Nelson, 'Symbols in Context', *Studies in Church History*, xiii (1976), pp. 114–15.

<sup>2</sup> See Averil Cameron, 'The early religious policies of Justin II', *Studies in Church History*, xiii (1976), pp. 65 f. for a preliminary sketch. I intend to argue this more fully elsewhere.

<sup>3</sup> See Averil Cameron, 'Corippus's poem on Justin II: a terminus of antique art?', *Annali della Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa*, 3 ser., 5. 1 (1975), pp. 129 ff.; I. Shahid, 'The Iranian Factor in Byzantium during the reign of Heraclius', *DOP* xxvi (1972), pp. 295 ff. See further below, pp. 99 f.; S. Spain Alexander, *Speculum*, lii (1977), pp. 220 ff.

<sup>4</sup> Proc., *BV* II. 9.

<sup>5</sup> Assuming that the *adventus* described in *De Caer.* I, app., pp. 495 ff. belongs to A.D. 559 (D. Serruys, 'A propos d'un triomphe de Justinien', *RÉG* xx (1907), pp. 240 ff.). See J. Deér, 'Der Ursprung der Kaiserkrone', *Schweiz. Beiträge z. allgemeine Gesch.* viii (1950), pp. 51 ff., and my commentary on Corippus, *Iust.* IV. 88 (London, 1976, p. 196).

<sup>6</sup> Alan Cameron, *Circus Factions* (Oxford, 1976), 230 ff. and my notes on Corippus, *Iust.* II. 308 f., III. 68 f.

<sup>7</sup> See Corippus, *Iust.* II. 260 f.; Nov. cxlviii (a. 566); Theophanes reports the conspiracies in Justinian's final years (pp. 234 f., de Boor). For all of this see below, pp. 104 f. The collapse and demoralization sometimes held to be contributory to the growing devotion to icons (e.g. L. W. Baranovskii, 'The Emperor Cult and the Origins of the Iconoclastic Controversy', *Byzantion*, xlv (1973), p. 27 (= *The Graeco-Roman and Oriental Background of the Iconoclastic Controversy*, Leiden, 1974, pp. 77–8, on which, however, see *Byzantion*, xlv (1976), p. 127)) had already begun in Constantinople itself well before the seventh century.



terms, a surfacing of popular culture,<sup>1</sup> for the upper classes, if anything, led the way; rather, it was that now it seemed anachronistic to assume a classical veneer or to pretend, as Procopius still did in the *Wars* and Agathias still did to some extent even in the 570s,<sup>2</sup> that one was not as much in need of the comforts of the liturgy and the saints as the next man. A proper treatment of the period, and a true assessment of the rise of icons, would need to take all of this into account, and the growth of the Virgin's cult must be part of the wider complex. Nevertheless, I offer this separate treatment here as a preliminary study towards a fuller discussion, and because this particular aspect can be illustrated in part by means of an examination of certain specific texts which require detailed and separate analysis. The end of the paper will attempt to set these texts within the wider context again.

\* \* \*

Our first text is a prayer to the Virgin put by Corippus into the mouth of the Empress Sophia as she prepares for the coronation of her husband Justin II in November, 565.<sup>3</sup> It is not yet very well known and has never, to my knowledge, been discussed in any of the innumerable studies of Marian prayers and doctrines.

Virgo creatoris genetrix sanctissima mundi,  
 excelsi regina poli, specialiter una  
 vera parens et virgo manens, sine semine patris  
 quam deus elegit matrem sibi, credula verbum  
 concipiens nostram genuisti feta salutem. 55  
 o pietas miranda dei dictaque tremenda!  
 caelorum factor dominus deus, unica patris  
 forma dei, verae sese velamine carnis  
 induit, et servi formam de virgine sumpsit. 60  
 quos tibi, quos genito dignos solvemus honores  
 pro tantis, benedicta, bonis? te, gloria matrum,  
 auxiliumque inploro tuum: te semper adorem,  
 te fatear dominam servatricemque novarum  
 Iustini rerum: nostrum caput, inclita, serva, 65  
 tutare imperium, vitam rege, perfice coepta,  
 da bene dispositis procedant omnia nostris,  
 subde feras gentes. iusto mucrone superbi  
 depereant. vestro semper tutamine vivam. (*Iust.* II. 52-69)

<sup>1</sup> See below, p. 102.

<sup>2</sup> Averil Cameron, *Agathias* (Oxford, 1970), pp. 89 ff. See too 'The "Scepticism" of Procopius', *Historia*, xv (1966), pp. 466 ff.

<sup>3</sup> For a full commentary on this passage see my notes, ad loc.

This extract is interesting in many ways. It is a direct prayer to the Virgin, written in Constantinople in the middle of the sixth century, very soon after the dramatic date of the poem itself.<sup>1</sup> We should not be misled by the fact that it is written in Latin, for the panegyric as a whole belongs firmly in the setting of the imperial court of Constantinople, and the context of this prayer is wholly Greek. It was still a matter of prestige for emperors to have Latin panegyrics written about them,<sup>2</sup> and there was more Latin (and more Westerners) in Constantinople at this time than is usually realized; but this particular poem was written in an overwhelmingly Greek atmosphere, for a mainly Greek-speaking audience, and owes more to the Greek intellectual background of Constantinople and even to Greek literary patterns as such than to Christian Latin poetry. Corippus had originated from Roman Africa, and doubtless had been familiar there with the African Christian Latin poets, yet here his models are quite different.<sup>3</sup> In terms of thought-patterns, then, I shall associate the prayer to the Virgin primarily with contemporary Greek examples. It must be stressed, furthermore, that within the context of Corippus' poem this passage stands out as odd: usually the poet avoids an obviously devotional note, yet here the concentration of 'Christianisms' and indeed strictly technical expressions is very striking.<sup>4</sup> The only comparable passages are an equally odd one, where Corippus has a particular reason for writing as he does<sup>5</sup> and the parallel passage to this—the emperor's prayer to God, which this time does draw heavily on Latin authors,<sup>6</sup> who offered Corippus ready models for the theme of God the creator. For the prayer to the Virgin, however, there was no similar model available in Latin poetry; thus Corippus has felt free to express religious ideas which were appropriate to the person and the occasion—even at the expense of strict suitability to the literary context. The prayer is all the more striking in comparison with his other passage devoted to the Virgin, at the beginning of the poem,<sup>7</sup> where he makes her appear to Justin in a dream to foretell his accession and

<sup>1</sup> Corippus must have written books I-III of the *In laudem Iustini* in 566: see my edition, p. 2.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Corippus, *Iust.* IV. 154-5 with my note. Evidently the recitation of such panegyrics was a part of the ceremonial itself.

<sup>3</sup> For the originality of Corippus see C. Witke, *Numen Litterarum* (Leiden and Köln, 1971), pp. 141, 230.

<sup>4</sup> e.g. *specialiter, credula, benedicta, virgo manens, velamine carnis, gloria matrum.*

<sup>5</sup> *Iust.* IV. 290 f., a virtual paraphrase of the Creed, intended as a compliment to the decree passed by Justin ordering the Creed of Constantinople to be read in all churches (Joh. Bielar, *a.* 567).

<sup>6</sup> Notably Sedulius, *Carm. Pasch.* I. 60 f. and Dracontius, *Laud. Dei*, III. 532 f.

<sup>7</sup> *Iust.* I. 32-67.



symbolically to offer him the crown;<sup>1</sup> here, though recognizable, she is presented not merely in the guise of a conventional divine personage in the style of traditional Latin epic, but specifically in the language of Virgil's Venus appearing to Aeneas.<sup>2</sup> Corippus was far from successful in reconciling the classical and the Christian sides of his poem but he did usually endeavour to do so; consequently the overtly devotional nature of Sophia's prayer to the Virgin allows us to take it as a genuine expression of Marian sentiments of the mid-sixth century. Whose sentiments, and at whose instigation the prayer might have been included, are questions to which we may return later.

There is indeed evidence for a special attachment to the Virgin on the part of Justin and Sophia.<sup>3</sup> It was to centre on the churches of Blachernae and Chalcoprateia, both the possessors of precious relics of the Theotokos,<sup>4</sup> and Corippus indeed says that Sophia went to pray in what the poet calls, in his classicizing style, a *templum*, typically unnamed.<sup>5</sup> What chiefly concerns us here is the first part of Sophia's prayer, which consists of an instructive repertoire of Marian themes and images.<sup>6</sup> The briefest comparison with the other texts adduced here (which can be supplemented by many others) will show immediately that Corippus's prayer represents a living tradition of prayer and doctrine. His use of the term *regina poli*, for example (l. 53) is extremely interesting. The Western iconographic theme of Maria Regina was well developed in Rome already in the sixth century, though it is true that it received its biggest impetus only with the papacy of John VII (705-7).<sup>7</sup> But in the

<sup>1</sup> I. 37-8: *divinos stetit ante pedes, dextraque coronam inposuit, sanctoque caput diademate cinxit.*

The iconographic theme may be later (A. Grabar, *L'Empereur dans l'art byzantin* (Paris, 1936), 112 f.), but there are many earlier foreshadowings of it in both art and literature; see my note, ad loc.

<sup>2</sup> *Aen.* I. 314 ff.

<sup>3</sup> See p. 98 below

<sup>4</sup> See Janin, *Les Églises*, pp. 167 f., 237 f. Justin and Sophia built a chapel for the Virgin's robe at Blachernae and a reliquary for her girdle at Chalcoprateia, an important church very near to Hagia Sophia, besides commissioning additional building work in both churches. N. Baynes (art. cit. (p. 80 n. 1), pp. 257 f. and 'The Finding of the Virgin's Robe', *Byzantine Studies*, pp. 240 ff.) sympathetically shows what the presence in the city of these relics really meant to the people of Constantinople.

<sup>5</sup> *Iust.* II. 48, with my note (probably Chalcoprateia).

<sup>6</sup> e.g. mother of the creator (l. 52), queen of heaven (53), ever-virgin (54), type of faith (*credula*, l. 55), mother of salvation (56), vessel of the incarnation (58-9), God taking the form of a slave (60, cf. Philipp. ii. 7), glory of motherhood (63). Sophia prays to Mary directly; she does not ask for her intercession (ll. 65 f.). For a full commentary see my notes, ad loc.

<sup>7</sup> The iconographic theme of Mary as queen begins with the fifth-century mosaics of S. Maria Maggiore; the earliest Maria Regina in S. Maria Antiqua is sixth century (M. Avery, 'The Alexandrian Style at Santa Maria Antiqua,

Eastern empire so far no such artistic treatment of the Virgin as queen has been known. Now, however, a recently discovered mosaic from Durazzo in Albania may indicate that the theme was making its appearance in the East before the end of the sixth century.<sup>1</sup> Corippus's use of the term 'queen of heaven' deserves to be stressed, therefore; still more if, as I shall argue later, Corippus's work was known to Venantius Fortunatus, who has been termed 'le premier poète de la "Royauté de Marie"'.<sup>2</sup> The idea of the Virgin as queen could be found in Greek sources available to Corippus,<sup>3</sup> and in the context of his prayer he gives it no special emphasis. But given that there are other grounds for arguing that Venantius had access to Corippus's work,<sup>4</sup> the prominence of the queen of heaven theme in the *In laudem Mariae* attributed to Venantius is a strong argument in favour of the attribution, which I shall discuss further below. To return to Corippus's prayer and its living context: the word plays of ll. 55-6 are characteristic of the Greek hymns of the period,<sup>5</sup> while the phraseology of l. 60, Scriptural in origin, follows that of many literary versions of the Nativity.<sup>6</sup> *Benedicta* (l. 62) of course recalls the greeting of the Archangel,<sup>7</sup> and *gloria matrum* can be closely paralleled from hymns and homilies.<sup>8</sup> After this Sophia's prayer becomes more specific, as she asks for aid for Justin's rule,<sup>9</sup> but the affiliations of the opening address and its relevance to contemporary devotion and worship rather than to mere literary tradition are I think undeniable.

Rome', *The Art Bulletin*, vii (1925), p. 133 and in general P. Romanelli and N.-J. Nordhagen, *Santa Maria Antiqua*, Rome, 1964). Now see E. Kitzinger, *Byzantine Art in the Making* (Cambridge, Mass., 1977), pp. 113 f., and cf. Wellen, op. cit., pp. 158 f.; M. Lawrence, 'Maria Regina', *The Art Bulletin* vii (1924/25), pp. 150-61. For the patronage of John VII (705-7), who commissioned representations of the Virgin in majesty in S. Maria Antiqua, Old St. Peter's and S. Maria in Trastevere see Warner, op. cit. (106-7).

<sup>1</sup> For the mosaic, found in 1967, see N. Thierry, 'Une mosaïque à Dyrachium', *Cahiers archéologiques*, xviii (1968), pp. 227 ff. (a Christ of the seventh century and Ravennate in inspiration). However, Dr. Robin Cormack wishes to date the work to the 590s and queries the necessity of postulating Western influences. The figure is clearly a Maria Regina.

<sup>2</sup> G.-M. Roschini, 'Royauté de Marie', in H. du Manoir (ed.), *Maria*, i (Paris, 1949), p. 609.

<sup>3</sup> e.g. Trypanis, op. cit. XIV, str. β' (probably fifth century).

<sup>4</sup> Below, pp. 90 f.

<sup>5</sup> Below, pp. 86 f.

<sup>6</sup> Philipp. ii. 7. Cf. Proclus of Constantinople, PG 65. 700; Sedul., *Hymn* 2. 6, etc.

<sup>7</sup> Luke i. 28.

<sup>8</sup> Proclus, PG 65. 680; Trypanis, XIV, str. 47'.

<sup>9</sup> *Iust.* II. 65-9. Lines 68-9 perhaps refer to the 'conspiracy' put down in the first year of Justin's reign; see note, ad loc.



Corippus was writing in Constantinople and in the immediate presence of a rich vein of Marian hymnography. The closest parallels for Sophia's prayer are therefore certainly the Akathistos hymn<sup>1</sup> and the several *kontakia* on the subject of the Virgin from this period by Romanos and others.<sup>2</sup> Every discussion of Marian worship has its section on the Akathistos hymn,<sup>3</sup> and it is now often agreed that its author was Romanos himself.<sup>4</sup> Even if this is not so, it still seems likely that it is Justinianic, perhaps before c. 530,<sup>5</sup> and therefore contemporaneous with Romanos's activity. Even before it was used as the great hymn of victory in 626,<sup>6</sup> it must have exercised an enormous influence on the liturgical and devotional life of Constantinople, especially as expressed in the growing (though still rudimentary) cycle of Marian feasts<sup>7</sup> celebrated not only in Hagia Sophia but also in churches of the Theotokos throughout the city.<sup>8</sup> Corippus will not have been immune to this influence, and at this point in his poem he has allowed the real life of the city to take precedence over considerations of literary form. Romanos had composed a whole body of exotic and quite unclassical hymns during the first half of the century, and there were clearly many who followed his example, and of whose work some would have been in liturgical use, whether attributed or anonymous. And if Procopius's *Wars* and *Buildings* are seen as in some sense 'official' works, we should not forget that the same is true for some of the works of Romanos, and doubtless other hymnographers too.<sup>9</sup> Within this mass of work some inevitably concerned the subject of the Virgin, and with the formal adoption by Maurice of the feast of the Assumption on 15 August (to which we shall return)<sup>10</sup> further compositions were stimulated.<sup>11</sup> A passage like the prayer of Sophia in a formal literary work represents only the merest tip of the iceberg. The sixth-century hymn in its Greek form was an importation from Syria, where the rich word plays and

<sup>1</sup> See p. 80 n. 1 above.

<sup>2</sup> Trypanis, *op. cit.*, nos. 10-12; Romanos, *On the Nativity*, ed. P. Maas-C. A. Trypanis, *S. Romani Melodi Cantica I: Cantica Genuina*, (Oxford, 1963), pp. 1 f.

<sup>3</sup> e.g. Wellesz, *art. cit.*, pp. 148 f.

<sup>4</sup> Trypanis, *op. cit.*, pp. 24-5.

<sup>5</sup> Wellesz, *art. cit.*, pp. 151-2.

<sup>6</sup> R. H. Chabot, 'Feasts in Honour of Our Lady', in J. B. Carol, *Mariology*, iii (Milwaukee, 1960), pp. 22 ff.; M. Jugie, *op. cit.*, pp. 175 ff.; Wellen, *op. cit.*, p. 140.

<sup>7</sup> Above, p. 80 n. 2.

<sup>8</sup> Romanos as an 'establishment poet': E. Topping, 'The Apostle Peter, Justinian and Romanos the Melodos', *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies*, ii (1976), pp. 1-16.

<sup>9</sup> Niceph. Call., *HE* 17. 28; see below, p. 95.

<sup>11</sup> Notably homilies; see Jugie, *op. cit.*, pp. 175 ff.

rhythms of the early fourth century Syriac hymns of St. Ephraem had set a powerful example.<sup>1</sup> It is a great mistake to see sixth-century Constantinople, where the liturgy was one of the most potent influences on the consciousness of all classes of society, too much in terms of classical survivals in literature or anything else; and in addition to the liturgy, there was a further major vehicle for the expression of doctrines and religious attitudes in the homily, where we also find parallelisms for Corippus's phrases. Here too the important examples of the genre reflect the development of the Marian feasts and the growth of worship of the Theotokos. It was inevitable that the establishment of the feast of the Assumption would evoke a striking number of *kontakia* and homilies on that theme,<sup>2</sup> but Maurice's initiative in adopting the feast must surely have been a response to pre-existing developments, hardly the bolt from the blue that it might otherwise appear. The striking emphasis that Corippus gives to his prayer to the Virgin is in itself a valuable sign that Marian devotion in Constantinople was conspicuously increasing during the sixth century, as indeed the testimony of Procopius's *Buildings* already shows.<sup>3</sup> The clergy of Blachernae are enough to demonstrate the exceptional position of this church, second only to Hagia Sophia; at this period they numbered a hundred or more, for we are told that Heraclius reduced them as an economy measure to seventy-four.<sup>4</sup> Once the cult of the Theotokos had been officially promoted at the Council of Ephesus, after its late emergence into the main-stream of religious life near the end of the fourth century,<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Robert Murray has provided a valuable study of the technique of St. Ephraem, founder of Eastern hymnology and one of the most eloquent poets of the Virgin (*Symbols of Church and Kingdom*, Cambridge, 1975), esp. pp. 144 f. The best introduction to the problems of Ephraem's life and works is provided by A. Vööbus, *Literary, critical and historical studies in Ephrem the Syrian* (Stockholm, 1958). For Ephraem's Mariology see E. Beck, 'Die Mariologie der echten Schriften Ephraems', *Oriens Christianus*, xl (1956), pp. 22 ff.

<sup>2</sup> Below, p. 96. For *kontakia* see Maas-Trypanis, *op. cit.*, intro., para. 1; Wellesz, *art. cit.* (p. 80 n. 1), pp. 145 f.

<sup>3</sup> See G. Downey, 'Notes on Procopius, *De Aedificiis*, Book I', *Studies presented to David M. Robinson*, ii (St. Louis, 1953), p. 724.

<sup>4</sup> J. Pargoire, *L'Église byzantine de 527 à 847* (Paris, 1905), p. 115.

<sup>5</sup> The question how exactly Christians were to think of Mary became crucial quite suddenly in the late fourth century, when the works of Epiphanius (*PG* 42. 740-56) demonstrate hostility to certain Marian cults. The reasons for Mary's sudden prominence are primarily christological, for the virgin birth is obviously crucial in settling the problem of the incarnation: hence the pre-occupation of the Council of Ephesus with the Theotokos (see below, p. 95). Many contemporary allusions, W. Delius, *Geschichte der Marienverehrung* (München/Basel, 1963), pp. 104 f. For an explanation affirming the resurgence of a 'feminine principle' of a Jungian kind, see G. Miegge, *The Virgin Mary* (London, 1955), pp. 74 ff. The paucity of references to Mary in the patristic period—quite apart



it is true that it had grown quickly and steadily. In Greek a stream of homilies and hymns appeared, among which we can point to the homily of Proclus, soon to become patriarch of Constantinople, delivered before the Council in 428 or 429 as part of the campaign in favour of the Theotokos-title,<sup>1</sup> and the fifth-century homilies of Theodotus of Ancyra and Basil of Seleucia.<sup>2</sup> The colourful prefect and poet Cyrus of Panopolis also has a place in the history of Marian devotion shortly after Ephesus; he dedicated a church to her in Constantinople, and pointedly introduces her in the poem he composed for the pillar of Daniel the Stylite, but further, the extraordinary sermon (of one sentence only) that he preached when sent in virtual exile as a bishop to Phrygia, enunciated (in accordance with the teachings of Proclus, now patriarch) the doctrine familiar in the Middle Ages that the Virgin conceived through the ear.<sup>3</sup> Thus Cyprus, exiled on a charge of 'paganism', was certainly a defender of the Virgin, a follower of Proclus, and a supporter of the Council of Ephesus, at which the Theotokos was proclaimed as a 'symbol of correct belief'.<sup>4</sup> The anonymous *kontakion* on the Virgin which we happen to have surviving was surely not the first of its kind,<sup>5</sup> and many of the types and epithets of the Virgin found

from the very limited evidence provided by the Gospels themselves—and the silence about any cult in the first three centuries remain a puzzle, as is indicated by such works as O. Faller's *De priorum saeculorum silentio circa Assumptionem B. Mariae Virginis* (1946).

<sup>1</sup> T. E. Gregory, 'The Remarkable Christmas Homily of Kyros Panopolites', *GRBS* xvi (1975), pp. 321 f.; F. X. Bauer, *Proklos von Konstantinopel* (Munich, 1919). Proclus was supported by Cyril, the patriarch of Alexandria, and opposed by Nestorius, patriarch of Constantinople—who was to be excommunicated when the Council of Ephesus in 431 (at which Cyril presided) proclaimed the Theotokos title. For Proclus's homilies see *PG* 65, 680 f., and for the attribution problems see Gregory, art. cit., p. 321. There is also a sermon on the Virgin attributed to Atticus of Constantinople but probably in part the work of Proclus—*PG* 65, 715–22. Proclus's Marian work shows a very well-developed typology in existence already, e.g. 'bridge', 'workshop', 'portal'.

<sup>2</sup> See Jugie, op. cit., pp. 175 ff. The works can be found in *PG* 77, *PO* 16, 318–35 and *PG* 85, 425–52. For Theodotus see M. Aubineau, *OCP* xxxvi (1960), pp. 221 ff.

<sup>3</sup> See Gregory, art. cit., pp. 320 f.; the poem on Daniel's pillar: *AP* I, 99. Cyrus's sermon: Malal., p. 362, Theoph., pp. 96–7. D. J. Constantelos, 'Cyros Panopolites, Rebuilder of Constantinople', *GRBS* xii (1971), pp. 451 ff., succeeds in removing most of the interest from Cyrus in the interests of claiming him as a 'Christian Hellene' with a brand of 'practical Christianity' worthy of Dr. Arnold. The idea that the Virgin conceived through hearing (a common theme in medieval art) was no mere conceit of Cyrus; see Gregory, art. cit., pp. 321–2, and see too Venantius Fortunatus, *Spur.* 8, 11–12 (but cf. p. 91 n. 9 below).

<sup>4</sup> Gregory, art. cit., pp. 322–3.

<sup>5</sup> Trypanis, op. cit. XIV.

in the sixth and seventh-century works had certainly been developed and popularized much earlier.<sup>1</sup> The stories of the finding of the Virgin's robe, and of the acquisition by the city of Constantinople of her girdle are located in the fifth century, when shadowy traces of Marian feasts are also to be found.<sup>2</sup> Yet the full emergence of the Theotokos as the special protectress of Constantinople belongs to the late sixth century, and must be explained in terms of the special conditions of the period. Corippus's evidence is the first significant pointer.

It must be stressed again that the prayer in Corippus has wholly local, i.e. Greek, affiliations, and stems directly from the thought-patterns embedded in the living practice of Marian faith. There was little sign in the West as yet of a similarly typological approach in writings about the Virgin.<sup>3</sup> Indeed, what has been described as the oldest poetic composition so far known in honour of the Virgin, a Latin hymn preserved on papyrus and datable palaeographically to the early fourth century, is conspicuously different.<sup>4</sup> Written in rhyming and rhythmical stanzas, it begins with a prayer to God the Father, and passes on to a narrative of Mary's life—her birth, childhood, betrothal, the Annunciation, the Nativity, the flight into Egypt, passing straight on to the marriage at Cana, where it breaks off. As yet it is unparalleled, and this simple devotional narrative has little in common with Corippus's confident and familiar utilization of the developed repertoire of Marian types and motifs.

A consideration of another Western poet will, however, prove more

<sup>1</sup> Proclus's homily is proof enough (p. 88 n. 1); see also Ashe, op. cit., pp. 175 f., *Catholic Encyclopaedia*, s.v. Virgin, XV, 464e. It might be instructive to look at some of the imagery associated with the virgin birth (bridges, doors, ploughs, the ark, caverns, etc.), bearing in mind, for example, similarly obvious sexual imagery in Greek comedy (J. Henderson, *The Maculate Muse*, New Haven, 1975, p. 137). Other parallels suggest themselves too. There was a very obvious correlation between the developing cult of the Virgin (and especially its linguistic expression) and the fourth-century emphasis on asceticism, which has, however, yet to be fully explored. Nor has the cult of the Virgin yet been much studied by sociologists or anthropologists (for a beginning, see E. Leach, 'Virgin Birth', *Proc. Royal Inst. of Anthropology*, 1966, pp. 39 ff.; Mary Douglas, *Purity and Danger*, London, 1966, provides much food for thought).

<sup>2</sup> N. Baynes, 'The Finding of the Virgin's Robe', *Byzantine Studies* (London, 1955), pp. 240 ff. Marian feasts: see p. 86 n. 7 above, and see A. Raes, 'Aux origines de la fête de l'Assomption en Orient', *Orientalia Christiana Periodica*, xii (1946), pp. 262 ff.

<sup>3</sup> I would argue that the language used of the Virgin by poets such as Prudentius, Claudian (*De Salvatore*), Merobaudes (*Carmina Christi*) and Sedulius has more to do with literary paradoxes than real devotional vocabulary. For the *Lat.* 494c see p. 91 n. 6 below.

<sup>4</sup> Lavishly edited by R. Roca-Puig, *Himne a la Verge Maria: 'Psalmus Responsorius'*, *Papir llatt del segle IV* (Asociación de Bibliófilos de Barcelona, 1965).



fruitful. Venantius Fortunatus has long been recognized (sometimes for dubious reasons) as one of the earliest poets to give expression to Marian themes.<sup>1</sup> If this is indeed so, and if it could be argued that Venantius was well informed about religious developments in the Eastern capital, and even that he knew of Corippus's panegyric or possibly possessed or had seen a copy himself, the Marian features in his work could then be seen as a reflection and confirmation of ideas current in Constantinople. Venantius's friend, the historian and bishop Gregory of Tours, himself had close Byzantine contacts,<sup>2</sup> and it is Gregory himself who first enunciates in the West the story of the Assumption of the Virgin.<sup>3</sup> This network, as we shall see, tells us less about the development of Marian cult in Gaul than about contemporary Constantinople, whence Gregory and Venantius derived ideas and information. It is legitimate therefore as well as instructive to set Venantius's Marian verse in comparison with Corippus's prayer, and to see what conclusions follow.

Venantius's connections with Constantinople are already well known,<sup>4</sup> but they have not yet, perhaps, been seen in a true light. When Justin II came to the throne at the end of A.D. 565, Venantius was still making his way from Ravenna on a pilgrimage to the tomb of St. Martin at Tours. By 567 he had certainly reached Poitiers, which was to be his home henceforth, the scene of his literary *œuvre*, his friendship with St. Radegund, the place of his bishopric and the setting for his contacts with others like himself, including the historian Gregory of Tours. An education in Ravenna would already have exposed him to strong Eastern cultural influences; very soon after he reached Poitiers Radegund's request to the new Eastern emperor for holy relics was answered by Justin's gift of a fragment of the True Cross, and Venantius was deputed to write the official poem of thanks to celebrate its reception. The poem which resulted<sup>5</sup> shows considerable awareness of currents of religious opinion in Constantinople—knowledge which must have

<sup>1</sup> e.g. Graef, *op. cit.*, pp. 130 f.; cf. Roschini (p. 85 n. 2 above).

<sup>2</sup> See Averil Cameron, 'The Byzantine Sources of Gregory of Tours', *JTS* N.S. xxvi (1975), pp. 421 ff.

<sup>3</sup> *De Gloria Martyrum*, 4 (ed. B. Krusch, *MGH, Script. rer. Merov.* i. ii (1885)).

<sup>4</sup> See especially Averil Cameron, 'The Early Religious Policies of Justin II', *Studies in Church History*, xiii (1976), p. 55. The best treatments of Venantius's life are those by W. Meyer, 'Der Gelegenheitsdichter Venantius Fortunatus', *Abh. der Königl. Gesellschaft der Wiss. zu Göttingen, philol.-hist. Klasse*, N.F., Bd. iv. 5 (1901), and R. Koebner, *Venantius Fortunatus: Seine Persönlichkeit und seine Stellung in der geistigen Kultur des Merowinger-Reiches* (Leipzig-Berlin, 1915).

<sup>5</sup> App. *carm.* 2 *Ad Iustinum et Sophiam Augustos*.

been derived from Radegund's original ambassadors who had gone to Justin with her pious request. In turn, a further embassy from Poitiers took Venantius's poem back to Constantinople. It is very probable, indeed likely, that a copy of Corippus's panegyric on Justin, finished as recently as 567,<sup>1</sup> had been taken to Poitiers by Radegund's first envoys, especially when we reflect that Corippus's work had reached the West at an early date<sup>2</sup> and that other reminiscences of his work in Venantius's poems have been independently detected.<sup>3</sup> Gregory of Tours also certainly welcomed Byzantine material when he could get it.<sup>4</sup> There is a whole network, in fact, of Franco-Byzantine relations in the early 570s, and there were many Westerners in Constantinople around this time.<sup>5</sup> It is perfectly possible, therefore, that Venantius could have been influenced by a reading of Corippus, including the Marian section. The cultivated Westerners who visited or lived in Constantinople in the later sixth century provided a channel for the passage of ideas and fashions, including religious fashions, in both directions. The somewhat unlikely medium of Latin poetry may after all provide an important indication of religious developments in Constantinople.<sup>6</sup>

To return to Venantius: Marian material in the certainly genuine poems is effectively confined to *Carm.* VIII. 3. 25–8, a few lines of little interest in a long poem on the theme of virginity. But authors of Mariological works frequently refer to Venantius as the author of other Marian poems without so much as mentioning problems of attribution.<sup>7</sup> Conversely, scholars who have debated at length the authorship of the *In laudem Mariae* attributed to Venantius have seldom adduced Mariological arguments.<sup>8</sup> The two Marian hymns, *Spur.* VIII 'Quem terra pontus aethera' and IX 'Ave maria stella', though the first is sometimes simply attributed to Venantius without comment,<sup>9</sup> can be

<sup>1</sup> Books I–III in 566, book IV perhaps late 566 or 567.

<sup>2</sup> See my edition, intro., p. 20.

<sup>3</sup> M. Manitius, 'Zu spätlateinischen Dichtern', *ZÖG* (1886), pp. 250 ff.

<sup>4</sup> Above, p. 90 n. 2.

<sup>5</sup> For some (but there are more) see *Studies in Church History* xiii (1976), p. 60. Useful material along these lines can be found in J. Sundwall, *Abhandlungen zur Geschichte des ausgehenden Römertums* (Helsingfors, 1919). The future pope Gregory I was the most notable of a group of Westerners at the court of Maurice.

<sup>6</sup> *Anth. Lat.* 494c (= de Rossi, *ICVR* II. 1, p. 109, no. 63), an inscriptional poem from the house of Pope Gregory, was thought by de Rossi to have accompanied a picture or icon of the Virgin, and might seem relevant to our theme. It is more likely, however, that it is either a Christmas poem or written to accompany a Nativity picture.

<sup>7</sup> e.g. Graef, *loc. cit.*, p. 130 n. 1; Koebner, *op. cit.* (p. 90 n. 4), pp. 143 ff.; D. Tardi, *Fortunatus* (Paris, 1971), pp. 167 ff.; S. Blomgren, *Studia Fortunatiana*, 2, *De carmine in laudem Sanctae Mariae composito Venantio Fortunato recte attribuendo*, Uppsala Universitets Arsskrift, 1934, 2, Diss. Uppsala (1934).

<sup>9</sup> Graef, *op. cit.*, p. 130.



quickly ruled out as certainly later.<sup>1</sup> The *In laudem Mariae*, a poem of 360 lines, is a very different matter. Though detached from the main body of Venantius's poems in the manuscripts which transmit it, and roundly condemned by Venantius's editor, the youthful F. Leo, as an *incondita farrago*,<sup>2</sup> it was already included with Venantius's work as early as the eighth century;<sup>3</sup> the most recent scholars to have debated the issue have tended to accept the attribution, on general, if subjective, grounds of similarity of style and language with Venantius's genuine work.<sup>4</sup> There are a number of similarities of ideas and language between this poem and the prayer in Corippus's panegyric, and while they could be explained away as being inherent in the subject matter, the trend of the argument so far, and certain wider considerations tend to support the idea of a direct connection.<sup>5</sup> The arguments against the authorship of Venantius rest solely on subjective judgements of supposed linguistic weaknesses and infelicities; yet the existence of a provable nexus of contacts between Venantius and his circle, including Gregory of Tours, and the Eastern capital would strongly argue for Venantius as the author of this striking and interesting poem. The work is admittedly distinguished from the other Marian compositions so far considered by its length and the complexity of its Old Testament analogies;<sup>6</sup> yet these features too are entirely in the style of Venantius.<sup>7</sup>

Perhaps the dominant theme of the poem, and certainly its most interesting feature, is the queenship of Mary in heaven. In particular ll. 261-6:

conderis in solio felix regina superno,  
cingeris et niveis lactea virgo choris,  
nobile nobilior circumstante senatu,  
consulibus celsis celsior ipsa sedens,<sup>8</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See F. Leo, ed. of Venantius's poems (*MGH auct. ant.* IV. 1, 1881), p. xxiv.

<sup>2</sup> *Loc. cit.* (n. 1).

<sup>3</sup> See especially G. M. Dreves, *Hymnologische Studien zu Venantius Fortunatus und Rabanus Maurus* (Munich, 1908). Already in the eighth century the *In laudem Mariae* is found in the manuscript tradition together with the certainly genuine poems—Leo, viii f., on P (eighth century), in which it is actually written twice, alongside the poems and the V. Martini. The case against Venantius's authorship must as yet be regarded as unproven.

<sup>4</sup> Most importantly, Blomgren (above, p. 91 n. 8).

<sup>5</sup> For similarities of detail see my commentary on *Iust.* II. 52-65.

<sup>6</sup> Especially in the first part (lines 1-118). See Blomgren, *op. cit.*, pp. 9 f.

<sup>7</sup> For example, of the longer poems cf. *Carm.* IX. 2. The poem *De virginitate* (VIII. 3) has fewer Old Testament analogies as such, but a similar piling up of proper names (ll. 135 f.).

<sup>8</sup> A common conceit. Cf. *Carm.* IV. 4. 19-20; Prudentius, *Peristeph.* IV. 74-6, 145-8; Sedulius, *Ep. ad Maced.*, p. 9; Justinian, *Nov.* 133 (a. 539)—monks are destined to become 'citizens of heaven'.

sic iuxta genitum regem regina perennem,  
ornata ex partu, mater opima, tuo.<sup>1</sup>

Venantius's Virgin is the queen of heaven. He goes on to present her as receiving the homage of the apostles, the patriarchs, prophets, and martyrs, as she is enthroned in Paradise (l. 292). From this point until the end of the poem the same theme is pursued—e.g. ll. 315-16:

cum regio ergo poli totusque exercitus astri  
te ornatam inspiciet, laudibus ora movet.

Mary is the *fulgor honorque poli* (l. 338), *super astra nitens* (l. 350); she receives the acclamations of the serried ranks of heaven (ll. 343-4). Such an emphasis is very striking. It is this after all that has earned Venantius his place in Mariological handbooks, and its developed appearance in this poem, whether it is by Venantius or not, is remarkable. The triumphal iconography of Maria Regina, later to be so prominent in Rome, was becoming more common in the sixth century already.<sup>2</sup> The feasts of Mary, and especially that of the Assumption, with which the theme of Mary's queenship was intimately connected, as we shall see, had yet, however, to be adopted in the West.<sup>3</sup> How, therefore, to explain the emphasis in the *In laudem Mariae*? Now in the first place we find that Corippus's prayer calls Mary *regina poli*. But further, our earliest testimony in the West to the story of the bodily assumption of the Virgin comes from Gregory of Tours, the close friend and colleague of Venantius.<sup>4</sup> We have seen that Gregory and Venantius shared a common social and religious milieu, and it seems far more likely that Gregory learned of the doctrine from his Eastern contacts than by reading a translation of Syriac apocrypha;<sup>5</sup> if so, he

<sup>1</sup> The rest of the poem continues the theme of Mary receiving the homage of all nations in heaven (cf. ll. 287 ff.), with plays on the breadth of heaven and the narrowness of Mary's womb (299-300); Mary's jewels and queenly raiment (301 f.); she receives the acclamations of the troops of heaven (315 f.), beginning with the archangels Michael (317 f.) and Gabriel and continuing with John the Baptist and Peter and Stephen (325 f., 333 f.).

<sup>2</sup> Above, p. 84 n. 7.

<sup>3</sup> Apparently not before the papacy of Sergius I (687-701); see P. Llewellyn, *Rome in the Dark Ages* (London, 1970), pp. 170-1; Wellen, *op. cit.* (p. 79 n. 3), p. 140.

<sup>4</sup> *De gloria martyrum*, 4—when the time came for Mary to die, the Lord appeared and ordered her body to be carried to Paradise in a cloud. See Cross, *Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*, 2nd edn. (1974), s.v. 'Mary'—the doctrine was 'formulated in the West' by Gregory of Tours. Graef, *op. cit.* p. 133—Gregory's reference is a sign of 'popular belief in Gaul' (a not unwarranted hypothesis).

<sup>5</sup> It is usually assumed that Gregory derived his reference from ps. Melito or some other Syriac *transitus* or Latin translation; so Krusch, *ad loc.*, Miegge,



was again testifying indirectly to current opinion in Constantinople, and the complementary emphasis of the *In laudem Mariae* on the queenship of Mary seems too striking to be accidental.

A further argument also points to Venantius as the author of the poem. Alongside the theme of queenship, the poem particularly insists upon the dual nature of Christ, in other words, it aims to reinforce belief in Chalcedonian orthodoxy.<sup>1</sup> Now this theme is not obviously suited to a Marian poem. But Venantius particularly insists upon it in his poem of thanks for the relic sent to Poitiers;<sup>2</sup> in praising Justin II and Sophia he presents them as the restorers of the faith of Chalcedon, a position which was politically necessary to Justin after Justinian's final heresy, and which he asserted very early in his reign by ordering the Creed of Constantinople to be sung in all churches.<sup>3</sup> Venantius was sensitive to Eastern religious moods, and, as he showed in his great hymns on the Holy Cross—inspired by Justin's gift to Poitiers<sup>4</sup>—himself rather advanced theologically; no mere 'Gelegenheitsdichter',<sup>5</sup> but the appreciative recipient of Byzantine court poetry. Educated in a Ravenna still very much a meeting-place for Easterners and Westerners,<sup>6</sup> he maintained his Eastern connections, and allows us to catch a glimpse of a more cosmopolitan culture than has usually been realized.

If Venantius be indeed the author of the *In laudem Mariae*, it may be that here is a further pointer to the ultimate connection between the developing cult of the Virgin and the rise of icons in the late sixth

op. cit. (p. 81 n. 5), 93, Jugie, op. cit. (p. 79 n. 3), p. 108 (not ps. Melito but a Latin translation of some fifth-century Syriac apocrypha). Personal Eastern contacts would be a more typical source for Gregory to have used. Cf. Jugie, op. cit., p. 269, where Jugie simply takes for granted the personal nature of the connection between Gregory and Venantius—'contemporain et ami de saint Grégoire de Tours'... 'devait admettre, comme lui, la résurrection glorieuse de Marie'. For the fifth-century apocrypha see A. Wenger, *L'Assomption de la Très Sainte Vierge dans la tradition byzantine du VI<sup>e</sup> au X<sup>e</sup> siècle*, *Archives de l'Orient chrétien*, v (Paris, 1955), and on Gregory of Tours, esp. p. 66; Wenger's careful study of the apocrypha makes it clear that no simple connection can be drawn between ps. Melito and what Wenger aptly calls 'l'affirmation tranquille de Grégoire de Tours' (p. 66). In the context of Gregory's methods, his friendship with Venantius and their common taste for Eastern tit-bits, I suspect that no written source need here be assumed.

<sup>1</sup> e.g. ll. 31 ff., 91 f., 119 f.

<sup>2</sup> *App. carm. 2 In Iustinam et Sophiam Augustos*. See *Studies in Church History*, xiii (1976), p. 58.

<sup>3</sup> Joh. Biclar., a. 567. See on Corippus, *Iust. IV*, 290 f.

<sup>4</sup> For the hymns see J. Szöverffy, 'Venantius Fortunatus and the earliest hymns to the Holy Cross', *Classical Folia*, xx (New York, 1966), pp. 107 ff.

<sup>5</sup> So Meyer, op. cit. (p. 90 n. 4).

<sup>6</sup> P. Riché, *Éducation et culture dans l'Occident barbare, VI-VIII<sup>e</sup> siècles* (Paris, 1962), pp. 62 ff.

century. For this period saw in Gaul too an evident shift in attitudes to holy images, an increase in the popularity of miraculous stories associated with icons, and the first manifestations of overt iconoclastic sentiments.<sup>1</sup> Gregory of Tours and Venantius Fortunatus are predictably prominent as witnesses to these developments.<sup>2</sup> As with the cult of the Virgin, we cannot say how far or how fast they had spread among the population at large; but this does seem to confirm an increasing impression that close contacts at certain levels were still maintained between East and West.<sup>3</sup>

In the Eastern Empire, it is clear, the sixth century saw a steady development of the liturgical feasts of the Virgin, now increasingly differentiated, and towards the end of the period the adoption of the Assumption as a feast of the Eastern church, to be celebrated on 15 August of each year.<sup>4</sup> We owe this information to Nicephorus Callistus alone, who attributes it to the Emperor Maurice, but sets it in the context of the reign of Justinian.<sup>5</sup> Generally speaking this event has received most attention in specifically Mariological works, in no way related either to imperial policy or to Marian developments in general.<sup>6</sup> Clearly, however, it must be seen against a wider context.<sup>7</sup> Certainly it was of crucial importance, for the seventh century sees a number of

<sup>1</sup> I have been fortunate to see a forthcoming paper (below, pp. 151-157) by R. A. Markus. For Serenus of Marseilles see H. Leclercq, *DACL* 7/1, s.v. 'Images: culte et querelle des', col. 216; Gregory I, *Epp.* IX, 208 and XI, 10.

<sup>2</sup> Greg. Tur., *De gloria martyrum*, 21, 22.

<sup>3</sup> So too P. Brown, 'Eastern and western Christendom in late Antiquity: a parting of the ways', *Studies in Church History*, xiii (1976), pp. 1 ff.

<sup>4</sup> The chief work on the subject is that of Jugie (p. 79 n. 3 above). See too Wenger, op. cit. (p. 93 n. 5); Miegge, op. cit. (p. 87 n. 5); A. Raes, 'Aux origines de la fête de l'Assomption', *OCP* xii (1946), pp. 262 ff.; O. Faller, *De Priorum saeculorum silentio circa assumptionem B. Mariae Virginis, Analecta Gregoriana*, xxxvi (Rome, 1946); H. S. Box, 'The Assumption', in E. L. Mascall and H. S. Box (eds.), *The Blessed Virgin Mary* (London, 1963), 89 ff. The chief point to have emerged from these studies seems to be the vagueness of testimonies to Marian feasts in the fifth and sixth centuries, together with the lack of specific references to the belief in Constantinople before Maurice introduced the official feast (under the Eastern name of *Koimesis*).

<sup>5</sup> Niceph. Call., *HE* 17, 28. There is no allusion to this in the section devoted to Maurice (18, 8 f.), not even at 18, 33, where Nicephorus tells a bizarre and bloodthirsty story of how the Theotokos punished some pagans who blasphemed her at a drunken dinner-party. It is perhaps significant, however, that this curious tale is attributed to the reign of Maurice, for Nicephorus cites it as proof of how the Theotokos defends the faith. For Nicephorus see G. Gentz, *Die Kirchengeschichte des Nic. Call. Xanthopoulos und ihre Quellen (Texte und Untersuchungen)*, Berlin, 1966, though no help can be found on the source of this paragraph.

<sup>6</sup> e.g. Graef, op. cit. (p. 79 n. 3), pp. 133 f.

<sup>7</sup> Frolov, art. cit. (p. 80 n. 1), pp. 93 f. does this in a preliminary way, but passing too quickly on to A.D. 626.



major homilies being delivered on the theme of the Assumption<sup>1</sup>—by which time, of course, the Virgin had taken her place in Constantinopolitan mythology as the warrior-protectress of the city.<sup>2</sup> The formal recognition of the feast also gave rise to Marian hymns on the general theme of the Assumption.<sup>3</sup> But even before the action of Maurice belief in the doctrine of the Assumption of the Virgin, with its attendant emphasis on her portrayal as queen of heaven, must have been growing in Constantinople; the prayer in Corippus offers some slight support, but more comes, however paradoxically, from the Western milieu of Venantius and Gregory of Tours. If Venantius composed the *In laudem Mariae* towards the end of his life, not far removed from the date of composition of Gregory's *De gloria martyrum*, we would have a context for Maurice's initiative;<sup>4</sup> nor is the context so indirect as might appear, when we remember that Pope Gregory and other prominent Westerners were intimately acquainted with the court at Constantinople. The apocryphal works which first told the stories of the passing of the Virgin derived, like so much else, from the East,<sup>5</sup> and it was in the Holy Land that a cycle of Marian feasts was taking shape in the sixth century.<sup>6</sup> In this the capital, and the West, fell temporarily behind. But in the capital, as in the Eastern provinces, the threat of external invasion was a powerful stimulus to this increased Marian fervour.<sup>7</sup>

In the reign of Justin II, when Corippus wrote his panegyric, the

<sup>1</sup> Jugie, *op. cit.*, pp. 175 f.; Graef, *op. cit.*, pp. 140 f.; to the seventh century belongs John of Thessalonica, to the eighth Germanus of Constantinople, Andrew of Crete, and John of Damascus. See Wenger, *op. cit.* (p. 93 n. 5); Wenger dates the homily of Theotokos of Livias to the second half of the sixth century (*op. cit.*, p. 103). Simultaneously with these homilies the tradition of the dedication of Constantinople to the Theotokos came into being (Frolow, *art. cit.* (p. 80 n. 1), pp. 89 f.).

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Geo. Pis., *Bell. Avar.* 445 (the warrior-Virgin). See Frolow, *art. cit.*, pp. 93 f. As in poetry the Virgin took on the role of victory (see esp. *Bell. Avar.* 1-5, 403 f., 450 f.) so too on seals she has already replaced the pagan Nike (see A. Grabar, *L'Iconoclisme byzantin* (Paris, 1957), pp. 34-5).

<sup>3</sup> Trypanis, *op. cit.* (p. 80 n. 1), X-XI.

<sup>4</sup> Koebner, *op. cit.* (p. 90 n. 4), 147, attributed the *In laudem Mariae* to the 590s, i.e. at the end of Venantius's life, after the death of Radegund, which occurred in 587. Koebner's reasons (ascribing the poem's supposed faults to the work of 'an old man') are better ignored, but the date proposed seems very possible. Gregory's *De gloria martyrum* probably belongs to 586-7 (G. Monod, *Études critiques sur les sources de l'histoire mérovingienne* (Paris, 1872), p. 44).

<sup>5</sup> Warner, *op. cit.* (p. 79 n. 5), pp. 81 ff. gives a sympathetic indication of how the stories grew.

<sup>6</sup> Raes, *art. cit.* (p. 95 n. 4); Jugie, *op. cit.*, pp. 175 ff.; Chabot, *art. cit.* (p. 86 n. 7), pp. 38 ff.

<sup>7</sup> See Warner, *op. cit.*, p. 87.

Virgin makes a dramatic appearance on bronze weights, with the inscription HAGIA MARIA BOETHISON.<sup>1</sup> On seals the transition from a pagan victory to the Virgin and child belongs to the reign of Maurice,<sup>2</sup> and the type continues into the seventh century. The child is represented in an *imago clipeata* to symbolize victory, which was now guaranteed by the Theotokos. As everyone remembers, the sails of the ships bringing Heraclius from Carthage to Constantinople and the imperial throne in 610 bore pictures of the Virgin,<sup>3</sup> and the icon of Blachernae was placed on the very gates of the city to defend it in 626.<sup>4</sup> By the time of the victories of Heraclius the efficacy of the Theotokos as a warrior-goddess was clear to everyone, and could be grandly extolled in panegyric;<sup>5</sup> but these earlier examples show that hopes of this kind had been increasingly fixed on her well before the end of the sixth century. Already in the days of Justinian the curtains in St. Sophia showed the Virgin in close connection with the emperor and empress,<sup>6</sup> as she had already been shown at Blachernae with the family of Leo I.<sup>7</sup> It was, too, the Virgin herself who, in Corippus's imagination, carried the news of Justinian's death to the new emperor,<sup>8</sup> and thus appeared in the iconographic guise of the divine figure who bestows the imperial insignia on the emperor.<sup>9</sup> In all of this the role of imperial patronage does, I feel, need to be reiterated.<sup>10</sup> No mere initiative from the top could dictate a change in the religious orientation of a whole society. But emperors and their advisers are no less open to new developments than other

<sup>1</sup> N. Dürr, 'Catalogue de la Collection Lucien Naville au cabinet de numismatique du Musée d'art et d'histoire de Genève', *Genava*, n.s. xii (1964), pp. 65 ff., no. 317. This is all the more striking, since on the coinage proper, always more conservative, the Virgin does not appear until after the defeat of Iconoclasm.

<sup>2</sup> Grabar, *L'Iconoclisme*, p. 35, and figs. 52 f.

<sup>3</sup> Theophanes, p. 298, de Boor. Grabar suggests that the representation was the same as that on the seals (*op. cit.*, p. 35).

<sup>4</sup> A. Mai, 'De Obsidione Constantinopolitana sub Heraclio imperatore', *Nova Patrum Bibliotheca* (VI. 2 (Rome, 1853), p. 428).

<sup>5</sup> Geo. Pis., *Bell. Avar.* 1-9 (p. 96 n. 2).

<sup>6</sup> Paul Sil., *H. Soph.* 802-4.

<sup>7</sup> Cod. Par. gr. 1447, fol. 258, on which see A. Wenger, *RÉB* 10 (1952), pp. 54 ff.; Grabar, *L'Iconoclisme*, p. 21; C. Mango, *The Art of the Byzantine Empire, 312-1453* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1972), p. 35.

<sup>8</sup> *Iust.* I. 28-68.

<sup>9</sup> See comm. ad loc. At a later date emperors could be greeted with the cry 'God has crowned you through the intercession of His immaculate Mother' (*De Caer.* I. 72, p. 283, 7 f., and see S. der Nersessian, 'Two images of the Virgin in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection', *DOP* xiv (1960), pp. 73 f.).

<sup>10</sup> Emphasized by E. Kitzinger, 'The Cult of Images in the Period before Iconoclasm', *DOP* viii (1954), pp. 125 f., followed by L. Barard, *art. cit.* (p. 13 n. 7), p. 27, *op. cit.* (p. 81 n. 7), p. 26, but see I. Brown, *EE Rcccvi* (1973), pp. 10 f. It was probably Justin II—or his advisers—who were instrumental in having the Christ-icon of Camuliana brought to Constantinople—a key event in imperial religious policy. See Kitzinger, *art. cit.*, pp. 99 f., 111-12, 114.



people, and it is certain that Justin II in particular encouraged the veneration of images by lending them the official support of the state. He was a devotee of the stylite St. Symeon the Younger, a friend of images and staunch defender of orthodoxy.<sup>1</sup> The saint did him personal favours including predicting his accession, and the two were linked closely by their mutual friend, the patriarch John Scholasticus, who replaced the exiled Eutychius in Justinian's last months, and who aided and crowned Justin II later in the same year.<sup>2</sup> Among the most notable expressions of the piety of the new emperor were his benefactions to the Virgin's churches at Blachernae and Chalkoprateia, where he provided new housings for her robe and girdle, the city's most precious relics.<sup>3</sup> When the intercession of the Theotokos seemed daily more necessary and more desirable, it was essential for the city to enshrine her most intimate memorials in all possible splendour. The relics associated with the Virgin were peculiarly potent, in that by her miraculous passing she had deprived the faithful of the more conventional bodily relics left by the saints; her garments, therefore, took on a special power, and the presence of the robe and girdle in Constantinople lay at the very basis of the city's devotion.<sup>4</sup> It should be noted that the rise of icons is concomitant with an increase in the veneration of relics, and that both have their place in Marian devotion.<sup>5</sup> And from the middle of the sixth century the Virgin herself was increasingly to be seen depicted on icons for the faithful to adore.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See the *Vita S. Symeonis Junioris*, ed. P. Van den Ven, *Subsidia Hagiographica*, 32. 1 (Brussels, 1962), chapters 202 f.

<sup>2</sup> P. Van den Ven, 'L'Accession de Jean le Scholastique en siège patriarcal de Constantinople en 565', *Byzantion*, xxxv (1965), pp. 320 ff. For this politico-religious nexus see my commentary on Corippus, *Iust.* II. 160.

<sup>3</sup> Janin, *op. cit.* (p. 80 n. 2), pp. 169 f., 237 f.; M. Jugie, 'L'Église de Chalco-pratie et le culte de la ceinture de la Sainte Vierge à Constantinople', *ÉO* xvi (1913), pp. 308 ff. Justin II's importance and motives as a patron of religious and secular art have yet to be appreciated, but see D. Talbot-Rice, *The Beginnings of Christian Art* (London, 1957, pp. 95-6).

<sup>4</sup> See N. Baynes, 'The Finding of the Virgin's Robe', *Byzantine Studies* (London, 1955), pp. 240 ff. Warner, *op. cit.* (p. 79 n. 5), pp. 290 f., well indicates the emotional power of such 'tokens' and see too P. Brown, 'Society and the Supernatural: a Medieval Change', *Daedalus* (1975), p. 146.

<sup>5</sup> For some hints at the connection see P. Brown, *art. cit.* (p. 80 n. 1), pp. 18, 29, 31. It was after all the Virgin's icon that was the focus of the trust placed in her in A.D. 626 (Brown, p. 18; Frolow, *art. cit.* (p. 80 n. 1), pp. 94 f.).

<sup>6</sup> Unfortunately there is very considerable disagreement among experts about the dates of some of the most important depictions of the Virgin from this period. The icon of the Virgin and Child with saints from St. Catherine's monastery on Mt. Sinai, for example, was surely sent by imperial initiative from Constantinople. Prof. Weitzmann, *The Monastery of Saint Catherine at Mount Sinai. The Icons I: from the 6th to the 10th century*, Princeton, 1976, pp. 18 f., accepts a Justinianic date, but others (Kitzinger, Wright, Sotiriou) would put it as late as

## THE THEOTOKOS

The emperors, then, certainly needed to follow general trends in religious feeling; yet, while realizing that the personal affiliations of an individual emperor might be limited in effect unless they coincided with the aspirations of society at large, it does seem clear that Justin II and Sophia exercised a deliberate imperial patronage in religious affairs as in art. They were not consistent in their tastes, for it was Justin who revived the traditionally Roman ceremonial of the consulship and who put the figure of Constantinople on his coins.<sup>1</sup> Yet the very fact that Corippus included this prayer to the Virgin in a panegyric commissioned for the emperor himself, besides making Mary herself appear to Justin in a vision, supports the impression of an administration especially pious and alert to the possibilities of the newer developments in religious life. An official encouragement of the Virgin's cult from the imperial house could not be the whole explanation for its dramatic increase, but it should by no means be underestimated. The government, as we shall see, had much to gain in terms of social control from formalizing the cult of the Theotokos and transforming it into a special guarantee of safety for the city. It is no accident that the later sixth century saw also a conspicuous growth in the imperial and religious ceremonial (the two increasingly coincided) of the city,<sup>2</sup> nor, indeed, that it is Corippus's panegyric on Justin II, above all, which allows us to see how far this had progressed and how deeply—and how deliberately—the ceremonial had been invested with symbolic meaning.<sup>3</sup> Paul the Silentiary's poem

the seventh century. See now E. Kitzinger, *Byzantine Art in the Making* (Cambridge, Mass., 1977), especially pp. 104 f. The Pantheon icon in Rome has been associated with the Sinai icon too (D. Wright, 'The Shape of the Seventh Century in Byzantine Art', *First Annual Byzantine Studies Conference*, Cleveland, 1975, p. 19) and dated for other reasons to the beginning of the seventh century (*ibid.*, p. 13). Whatever the problems of dating individual works, however, it is clear that the second half of the sixth century was a germinal period in which representations of the Virgin become increasingly common. For a powerful (lost) icon of the Theotokos at Antioch in this period see Evagrius, *HE* v. 18, p. 213 Bidez-Parmentier.

<sup>1</sup> See especially Averil Cameron, 'Corippus's panegyric on Justin II: a terminus of antique art?', *Annali della Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa*, ser. 3, V. 1 (1975), pp. 129 ff.

<sup>2</sup> See Janet Nelson, *art. cit.* (p. 81 n. 1), pp. 100 f., 114 f.; Alan Cameron, *Circus Factions* (Oxford, 1976), pp. 230 ff. I intend to discuss this more fully elsewhere. The function of ceremonial (and in late sixth-century Byzantium ceremonial is increasingly subsumed into ritual—for the distinction see J. Goody, 'Religion and Ritual: the definitional problem', *British Journal of Sociology* xii (1961), pp. 142 ff.) is to reinforce the collective bonds within a society.

<sup>3</sup> See especially *art. cit.* (n. 1 above), though I would now argue that the elaborate concern for ceremonial evinced by Justin in 565/6 was deliberately fostered by the political group who had put him on the throne (see p. 98 n. 2).



on the rebuilt Hagia Sophia, delivered on 6 January 563, expressed the earnest desire to find a more solid reassurance of the stability of the imperial power after the plots and difficulties of the last few years.<sup>1</sup> The poet—one of the leading figures, we might note, in the so-called classical élite of the Justinianic administration—reiterates again and again the complementary roles of the emperor and the patriarch, their mutual dependence in securing the city's safety.<sup>2</sup> The emperor's role is coming to be defined more and more in religious terms, as part of a pulling together of the most powerful elements in the state in the interests of unity. Consequently we cannot accept the suggestion that the emperors of the late sixth century were now encouraging a cult of religious images—or the cult of the Theotokos—as a deliberate surrender of a previous imperial monopoly, implying a willing subordination henceforth of the emperor to Christ.<sup>3</sup> And the piety of individual emperors is only part of the explanation.<sup>4</sup> I would argue that Justin II in particular (and his successors followed his example) was actually strengthening the emperor's role by integrating it as fully as possible into the religious life of the people. The emperor is at the centre of religious developments, at least in the capital. Consequently the development of the inauguration and coronation ritual at precisely this period is crucial, as Janet Nelson has shown,<sup>5</sup> for here above all the imperial ceremonial can be seen to have dramatically increased in scope and complexity, while simultaneously taking on a fuller and fuller religious colour. The harnessing of the circus factions to take over the leading role in imperial ceremonial belongs to the same period again.<sup>6</sup> One could not expect the habit of rioting to cease overnight. However, there is no evidence for factional rioting as such from 565 until the reign of Phocas, by which date the factions had assumed a regular place at major imperial ceremonies such as marriages and baptisms,<sup>7</sup> and when there were special reasons for it, partly at any rate connected with Phocas's failure to appreciate the new role of the factions.<sup>8</sup> As for the inauguration ritual, it is Corippus again who demonstrates that the Blues and Greens were already in 565 performing acclamations accompanied by music and dancing as part of the official ceremonies.<sup>9</sup> Earlier

<sup>1</sup> On this point I owe a debt to an unpublished paper by Ruth Magdalino.

<sup>2</sup> For example, *H. Soph.*, 1 ff., 54 f., 71 f., 1026 f., etc.

<sup>3</sup> Kitzinger, *DOP* viii (1954), pp. 125, 127, followed word for word by Barnard.

<sup>4</sup> Kitzinger, pp. 126 f.

<sup>5</sup> Art. cit. (p. 81 n. 1), especially p. 100.

<sup>6</sup> Alan Cameron, *Circus Factions* (Oxford, 1976), pp. 249 f.; see also Corippus, *Iust.* II. 308 f., III. 68 f. with notes.

<sup>7</sup> *Circus Factions*, pp. 280 f.

<sup>8</sup> *Circus Factions*, pp. 254 f.

<sup>9</sup> *Iust.* II. 308 f.

in the century the factions had been to the fore in the complex of events surrounding an imperial inauguration;<sup>1</sup> now they merely led the celebrations following what was apparently a senatorial coup.<sup>2</sup> It is probably at this time, too, that the 'Byzantine' triumph, again with distinctively religious colouring, made its first appearance, displacing for ever the Roman-style triumph which Justinian had revived once and once only in his days of glory.<sup>3</sup> We are in a period of considerable complexity and ambiguity, when classical survivals in education, art, literature and ideology are still very noticeable. But the conclusion is inescapable that the later sixth century saw a change in the quality of Byzantine life, manifested in so many different ways, and particularly conducive to new religious developments which could effectively contribute to the acceptance of the changed situation. A strongly developed and complex imperial ceremonial (which in a theocratic society was necessarily religious) could be a powerful aid towards restoring unity in a society whose optimism, so evident a generation ago, had been badly shaken. At the same time, it was also in the interests of the authorities to encourage and institutionalize the growth of a cult which might convey a sense of divine help and support (and divert attention from an administration often itself in need of aid). The rise of icons was, I suggest, one feature of this period of stress and difficulty,<sup>4</sup> and that too was encouraged and promoted at this period by the highest classes of society.<sup>5</sup> But the cult of Mary above all represented a way in which the city itself might feel protected and specially singled out in the most efficacious way possible for direct access to God's mercy. After 626 the reality of her protection was manifest, and the way was open for the rampant development of the idea that the city was specially dedicated to the Theotokos.<sup>6</sup> Before 626

<sup>1</sup> *De Caer.* I. 91 f.; *Circus Factions*, pp. 262 f.

<sup>2</sup> The role of the senate in Justin's accession—my commentary on Corippus, *Iust.* II. 165 f. I suspect, however, that the senate's importance was less of an actuality than a front for the group furthering Justin's accession (p. 98 n. 2).

<sup>3</sup> Above, p. 81.

<sup>4</sup> On the direct accessibility of icons as a means to God see P. Brown and S. MacCormack, 'Artifices of Eternity', *New York Review of Books* 22 (20 Feb. 1975), 19; P. Brown, art. cit. (p. 80 n. 1), p. 18; *Studies in Church History*, xiii (1976), p. 15. I do not intend a simple stress-theory of religious change (for criticisms of such theories see M. Douglas, *Natural Symbols*, Harmondsworth, 1973, pp. 168 f.). These remarks must be regarded as preliminary, for the study of the rise of icons is still at a rudimentary stage, and its social context, especially in the urban setting of Constantinople, has yet to be explored.

<sup>5</sup> Agathias, for example, another member of the classical élite, seems to have been a devotee of icons in the 550s—see *AP* I. 34–6, and cf. I. 34, by Julius Scholasticus, probably a *Cycle* poet too.

<sup>6</sup> From 626 on, see Frolov, art. cit. (p. 80 n. 1), pp. 96 f.



the mood must have been one of cautious, sometimes desperate, hope, or, as Peter Brown puts it, 'anxious dependence'.<sup>1</sup>

It is often suggested or implied that increased devotion to the Virgin, like the worship of icons, represents somehow the faith of ordinary Christians which was taken up by, or which overwhelmed the élite.<sup>2</sup> In this period, the question is further confused by the complications which the still surviving classical culture brought to those who were under its influence. In the first place the whole concept of 'popular' religion is notoriously difficult to handle, and often quite inappropriate.<sup>3</sup> This is a period when holy men, saints, relics and so on—all the manifestations too commonly lumped together under the name of superstition—were as relevant for the élite as for anyone else.<sup>4</sup> Perhaps it is valid to ask why the exotica of Christianity seem to show themselves more conspicuously in the late antique period, and certainly to try to explain why religion permeates Byzantine life more and more totally as the sixth century progresses, but the answer will not be easily provided by a dichotomy between 'popular' and 'élite', as though the élite themselves were immune to popular ideas. The whole question of the social function of classical culture at this period needs to be re-examined for the East,<sup>5</sup> and some part of our answer undoubtedly lies in the

<sup>1</sup> *EHR* cccxvi (1973), p. 29.

<sup>2</sup> e.g. Miegge, *op. cit.* (p. 85 n. 5), pp. 75 f., but see also P. Brown, *The World of Late Antiquity* (London, 1971), pp. 180 f.; *EHR* cccxvi (1973), pp. 10 f. (criticizing the analysis of Kitzinger, *DOP* viii (1954), pp. 146, 119–20, 125–6, of an imperial monopoly resting on the analogous veneration offered to imperial images, giving way before the 'naïve, animistic ideas of the masses', but still affirming the universality of the appeal of icons, like that of holy men); *Studies in Church History*, xiii (1976), pp. 11 f., 15; Janet Nelson, *ibid.*, p. 115; also in the review-article cited above (p. 79 n. 5); Warner, *op. cit.* (p. 79 n. 5), p. 66 ('the faith of ordinary Christians' opposed to 'the upper échelons of Church and state'). We must beware of simple dichotomies between levels of society. The appeal of icons, as of the Theotokos, cannot be denied, but it was not necessarily 'popular'.

<sup>3</sup> See the wise remarks of A. Momigliano, 'Popular religious beliefs and the Late Roman historians', *Studies in Church History*, viii (1971), pp. 1 ff.

<sup>4</sup> Emperors, for example, and important people generally, were quick to cultivate holy men: see P. Brown, 'The Rise and Function of the Holy Man in late Antiquity', *JRS* lxi (1971), pp. 80 ff.; *World of Late Antiquity*, p. 184 (but seeing their motives in terms of the skilful canvassing of popular opinion). On the practical realism of the Orthodox Church see, however, N. Baynes, *Byzantine Studies*, pp. 44–5, while W. H. C. Frend, 'The Monks and the Survival of the East Roman Empire in the Fifth Century', *Past and Present*, liv (1972), pp. 3 f. and 'Popular Religion and Christological Controversy in the Fifth Century', *Studies in Church History*, viii (1971), pp. 19 f., sees the absence of elitism in the eastern government of the fifth and sixth centuries as a major factor in its survival.

<sup>5</sup> For the West see P. Riché, *Éducation et culture dans l'Occident barbare, VI–VIII<sup>e</sup> siècles* (Paris, 1962). There is nothing comparable for the Eastern empire.

reasons for the gradual loss of classical education in the second half of the century. But even in the Justinianic period it should be emphasized that the representatives of the 'classical élite' are themselves often devoted equally deeply to just the religious attitudes that are held to be antagonistic to classical culture—Agathias and Paul the Silentiary are notable examples, and so is Procopius, whose demonology in the *Secret History* hardly coheres with his 'scepticism' elsewhere.<sup>1</sup> These men were doing no more than reflecting the basic contradictions within Justinian himself. A preliminary assessment therefore would discard the 'popular' and 'élite' distinction at least for the moment as unhelpful, and would see the answer to the problem far more along the lines suggested by Evelyne Patlagean for explaining the superficially opposing literary genres of secular history and hagiography.<sup>2</sup> It is more a question of the circumstances in which people opt for certain kinds of expression rather than others, whether in literature, art, or indeed religion. In these terms, therefore, I would see the developments in Constantinople in the late sixth century as an example of the replacement of one socially accepted pattern by another rather than as a simple matter of the 'surging up' of popular opinion, as though it had been there all along but successfully suppressed by the élite.<sup>3</sup> It is rather that it is now to everyone's advantage to look for a new symbol to suit a changed situation. And the particular manifestations of Marian devotion that we have been considering are a useful reminder that the cult can well be an urban, indeed a metropolitan one, and is well adapted to focusing the civic and collective needs of a city.<sup>4</sup> One of its great strengths after all has been the extreme variety of forms that it can take and consequently of needs that it can fulfil; factors which might contribute to its strength in one period do not necessarily transfer easily to another.

We are entitled, then, to ask under what aspect the Virgin attracted such devotion in late sixth-century Constantinople. For the types under which Mary has been worshipped relate closely to the social characteristics of each period in turn.<sup>5</sup> Thus the sixth-century Theotokos of

<sup>1</sup> See Averil Cameron, 'The "Scepticism" of Procopius', *Historia*, xv (1966), pp. 466 ff.

<sup>2</sup> 'A Byzance: ancienne hagiographie byzantine et histoire sociale', *Annales E.S.C.* xxiii (1968), pp. 106 ff., especially 122.

<sup>3</sup> For example, P. Brown, *The World of Late Antiquity* (London, 1971), pp. 174 ff., esp. 186; contra, Brown, *EHR* cccxvi (1973), pp. 16 f., and now in 'Learning and Imagination', Inaugural Lecture, Royal Holloway College, May 1977. See also *JRS* lxi (1971), pp. 81 f.

<sup>4</sup> The Virgin in A.D. 626 displays all the qualities of Athena Promachos.

<sup>5</sup> Perhaps the most memorable contribution of Warner's book lies in her demonstration of this link between devotion to the Virgin under a certain aspect and the social context from which it springs.



Constantinople is not the *mater dolorosa*, nor is she the bride of Christ, nor yet the humble submissive Virgin of oppressed womanhood.<sup>1</sup> Nor is she yet the triumphant queen of heaven whose majesty could support the authoritarianism of the institutional church—though as we have seen, the idea is already nascent in Corippus and developed to some extent by Venantius. Instead, the Virgin of sixth-century Constantinople is before all else the most potent intercessor before God. What is most emphasized is her mediation; she stands between God and the suppliant, who looks to her for the assurance that his prayers will be answered. Even after 626, when the Virgin had proved her powers, it was as mediator—even more efficacious than before—that she was chiefly honoured.<sup>2</sup> Though for a time victory was the theme most emphasized,<sup>3</sup> the Virgin soon reappeared as the purveyor of God's power to men, even bestowing the crown on an emperor,<sup>4</sup> or as transmitting the supplications of men to God. And this special devotion to the intercession of the Virgin came, I would suggest, at a time when intercession was all too obviously needed. The robe and the girdle of the Virgin were merely the outward and visible signs that Constantinople could hope to enjoy the spiritual protection of the Virgin too. Quite apart from the political, military, and financial difficulties of the latter years of Justinian, which seemed somehow to be symbolically represented by the old emperor's decline into negligence and ultimately heresy, the city had experienced a visitation by plague of major magnitude, the effects of which seem hardly to have been fully appreciated by writers mainly anxious to detect Thucydidean imitations in Procopius's elaborate description.<sup>5</sup> The sixth-century outbreak constitutes in fact the first of the three pandemics so far experienced;<sup>6</sup> there were successive outbreaks over a period of nearly fifty years, and the effects at Antioch are vividly described by Evagrius, who lost 'many' children, a wife (the order is his), other members of his family, servants and country people, and subsequently a daughter and her child.<sup>7</sup> The extent of mortality is much

<sup>1</sup> All these themes are extensively treated by Warner, *op. cit.*

<sup>2</sup> See S. der Nersessian, 'Two Images of the Virgin in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection', *DOP* xiv (1960), pp. 73 ff.

<sup>3</sup> Frolow, *art. cit.* (p. 80 n. 1), pp. 98 f.

<sup>4</sup> p. 84 n. 1 above.

<sup>5</sup> Proc., *BP* II. 22–3, on which see G. Soyter, *BZ* xlv (1951), pp. 541 ff. The best treatments of the sixth-century plague are to be found in the specialist works of demographers and historians of plague. See, however, E. Stein, *Histoire du Bas-Empire*, ii (1968), pp. 756 f.

<sup>6</sup> T. H. Hollingsworth, *Historical Demography* (1969), p. 355.

<sup>7</sup> *HE* IV. 29. The third chief witness is John of Ephesus, frags. II. E–H, ed. van Douwen-Land, *Johannis Episcopi Ephesii commentarii de beatis orientalibus* (1889), pp. 227–40, unfortunately unknown to J.-N. Biraben and J. le Goff, 'La Peste au Haut Moyen Âge', *Annales E.S.C.* xxiv (1969), pp. 1484 ff., otherwise a most useful discussion of the sixth-century outbreak.

less possible to estimate even than that of the Black Death,<sup>1</sup> yet it unquestionably had drastic effects on the population of Constantinople as of other cities.<sup>2</sup> The loss of manpower and resulting economic problems must have been a prime cause of the difficulties of the late sixth century, and if the sixth-century plague did not give rise to the kind of penitential fervour with which the Black Death boosted the cult of the Virgin,<sup>3</sup> it must surely have had profound religious implications. The Theotokos herself, her own icons, and those of Christ and the saints might well seem to offer immediate succour.

• • •

To return to our starting-point; it does not seem by any means that the sixth-century devotion to the Virgin in Constantinople resulted from factors associated with the relation of the sexes in society, but grew for quite different reasons. It could be argued that Venantius's poetry reflects a different, Western, emphasis here—appropriate to his life-long role as friend and adviser to an aristocratic community of nuns headed indeed by a queen.<sup>4</sup> The poems of Venantius point the way to the Virgin of the troubadours, the heavenly queen who is the recipient of the same kind of courtly love as that expressed to living aristocratic ladies.<sup>5</sup> If Venantius has been seen as the first poet of the queenship of Mary he has also been described as the first poet of chivalry.<sup>6</sup> But if, again, he was influenced in the first place by what he had read and heard from Constantinople, it was subtly transformed when he came to express his own ideas on the subject. The Eastern sources do not share Venantius's romanticized view of female virginity. Nor is there any trace of the

<sup>1</sup> See Hollingsworth, *op. cit.*, p. 367, claiming a 50 per cent mortality in a period of four months; J. C. Russell, 'Late Ancient and Medieval Population', *Trans. American Philosoph. Soc.* N.S. 48. 3 (1958), p. 42 (40 per cent). In the absence of evidence comparable to that available for the fifteenth century, many obvious questions will probably have to remain unanswered; as yet, however, they have hardly been asked.

<sup>2</sup> The best discussion is that by D. Jacoby, 'La population de Constantinople à l'époque byzantine: un problème de démographie urbaine', *Byzantion*, xxxi (1961), pp. 81 ff. (= *Société et démographie à Byzance et en Romanie latine* (1975)).

<sup>3</sup> Warner, *op. cit.*, pp. 215 f.

<sup>4</sup> For Radegund and the convent of the Holy Cross at Poitiers see R. Aigrain, *Sainte Radegonde* (Paris, 1918, 2nd edn., Poitiers, 1952); F. Graus, *Volksherrscher und Heiliger im Reich der Merowinger* (Prague, 1965), pp. 407 ff.; F. Prinz, *Früher Mönchtum im Frankenreich* (Munich/Vienna, 1965), pp. 157 ff.

<sup>5</sup> Warner, *op. cit.*, pp. 149 f.

<sup>6</sup> R. Bezzola, *Les Origines et la formation de la littérature courtoise en Occident* (500–1200) (Paris, 1944), pp. 41 ff., esp. 60 f., 63 (Venantius displays 'un nouvel idéal mystique de la femme').



'feminine' ideals which Mary came to represent for later societies;<sup>1</sup> her role, in fact, seems at this period to have little specifically to do with her sex but much more to do with her position as mediator, in which she was accessible as a symbol to men and women alike. Constantinople was not at this point concerned to make ideological statements about families or the respective roles of the sexes; its interests were far more immediate and universal.

Venantius's work raises another point of contrast. For the theme of virginity as such as prominent elsewhere in his poems.<sup>2</sup> Writing as he did for a community of nuns, and within a Western tradition of writings on virginity, it was inevitable that the two themes—Mariology and virginity—should become intertwined. And in the wider context of the whole history of Mariology, the symbolism of virginity and the reasons for the appeal of asceticism must have a large place.<sup>3</sup> Part of Mary's very appeal lay in the fact that she was made to exemplify an ascetic ideal already powerfully attractive in itself. There is every reason therefore to ask why the chosen symbol of late sixth-century Constantinople was a symbol which denoted purity, and to wonder whether precisely this symbol and no other was chosen because societies which put a premium on purity are affirming lines of demarcation, that is in this case, affirming an ideal theocratic structure of society.<sup>4</sup> Nevertheless, there does not seem to be any special emphasis on Mary's virginity in the sixth-century Eastern texts, and I do not believe that this aspect was the most important one at the time. Purity, in the form of absolute virginity, is always a part of the Marian image, but it is not necessarily always the part that matters most at a given moment. Other aspects of Mary, especially her merciful intercession, might be more immediately relevant.<sup>5</sup>

Intercession, in fact, leads us to deeper conclusions about Byzantium in the late sixth century, in which indeed religion is perhaps as much a symptom and a social mechanism as a reality in itself. I have tried here merely to provide some of the evidence for a more certain picture of the development of the Virgin's cult at this period. We must, however, also

<sup>1</sup> Warner, *op. cit.*, pp. 177 f.; for a lively assertion of the social implications of the cult of the Virgin as emphasized in Spanish and Portuguese colonialism see C. R. Boxer, *Mary and Misogyny* (London, 1975), especially chapter 4.

<sup>2</sup> Especially *Carm. VIII. 3, De Virginitate*; see too VI. 4, VIII. 4, XI. 3 f.

<sup>3</sup> See J. Bugge, *Virginitas: An Essay in the History of a Medieval Ideal* (The Hague, 1968), on which see the review-article by Janet Nelson (above, p. 79 n. 5).

<sup>4</sup> See especially M. Douglas, *Purity and Danger* (Harmondsworth, 1970), pp. 137 f.; *Natural Symbols* (Harmondsworth, 1973), pp. 174 f., 194 f.; Nelson, *Studies in Church History*, xiii (1976), pp. 106 f., 114 f.

<sup>5</sup> Interesting confirmation of this from the point of view of the modern Orthodox Church is provided by M. Zernov, 'Women's Ministry in the Church,' *Eastern Churches Review*, vii (1975), pp. 34 ff., esp. 39.

explain it. I have tried to show that this is merely one phenomenon which belongs within a whole complex, a complex which must also—in part, at any rate—help to account for the rise of icons. I would see the late sixth century in terms of a movement towards the reintegration of society. It is not so much a matter of 'giving way' before popular pressure as of utilizing the common interests of all classes of society. Byzantium henceforth becomes far more uniform; to use the language of another discipline, strong on grid as well as group.<sup>1</sup> Given the structure of Byzantine society, religion is necessarily the mechanism by which the community can be redirected—which is not, of course, in any way to suggest that it is being artificially imposed from above, though the government might well encourage the development. The emperor himself, as part of a theocratic system, becomes more and more invested with religious symbolism; the growing imperial ceremonial, the ritualization of the theocratic system, is necessarily religious in its overtones and becomes more overtly so as time passes. The attempt to institutionalize the deviant elements represented by the factions not merely into the state structure at large but specifically into the imperial ceremonial itself is the most startling manifestation of the process at work. A society that had seen the killing and destruction of the Nika revolt, the spectacular successes and reversals of Justinian's wars, that had seen the new Hagia Sophia built and then collapsing, that had experienced the trauma of plague and earthquake, was entitled to want security. When it came it was brief, but it could be argued that the siege of A.D. 626 represented the moment at which unity within the city reached its peak in this period of the history of Constantinople—and the focus of that unity was the Theotokos. The late flowering of classical culture under Justinian had been an artificial growth at best and soon did give way, not to 'popular culture', but before more immediate needs. And as for icons, they did, it is true, represent the 'availability of the holy',<sup>2</sup> just as the Virgin's

<sup>1</sup> M. Douglas, *Natural Symbols*, pp. 77 f., 174 f. The 'liturgification' of Byzantine society in the late sixth century is an example of a society moving from strong group and weak grid (strong external boundaries, dislocated internal social relations) to strong grid and group—a highly unified culture validated by new symbols in which symbols of purity might be expected to be prominent (see Douglas, pp. 174 f.). To see the intensification of the cult of the Virgin at this period in these terms is to provide a functional interpretation. See further P. Rousseau, 'Structure and Event in Anthropology and History', *New Zealand Journal of History*, ix (1975), p. 26, on Brown's explanation of the rise of holy men. Both phenomena, however, can also be explained in structural terms—see Rousseau, *art. cit.*, p. 30 with reference to Patlagean, *art. cit.* (p. 105 n. 2). The two interpretations should not be regarded as mutually exclusive.

<sup>2</sup> P. Brown, *Studies in Church History*, xiii (1976), pp. 13 f.; *New York Review of Books*, xxii (20 Feb. 1975), p. 19.



intercession made God available too, but one is left asking why there should have been such a sharpened need for access to the holy at this time. Part of the answer would be that in the later sixth century we can see Byzantium developing—less a breaking-up of existing forms by the creation of new systems or movements than an effort towards reinforcement at every level of the existing cultural framework, an attempt by the governing class to impose control through ritualization and the validation of all this by the general acceptance of a symbol perfectly suited—through the idea of mediation—to belief in a total union of body and spirit,<sup>1</sup> the ultimate possible guarantee of safety and protection.

<sup>1</sup> M. Douglas, *Natural Symbols*, pp. 195–6. 'The orthodox doctrine of the Incarnation, reaffirmed at the Council of Chalcedon, and earlier, at Ephesus, 'insisted on a perfect mediation between spirit and matter' (p. 196). And in this delicate balance between denial of the spirit (Arianism) and denial of the flesh (Monophysism) the Virgin was at the very centre, a perfect symbol in the late sixth century of the 'restricted' code of interpretation (ibid.) so strikingly manifested in contemporary Byzantine society.



THE VIRGIN'S ROBE :  
AN EPISODE IN THE HISTORY  
OF EARLY SEVENTH-CENTURY  
CONSTANTINOPLE

When Norman Baynes wrote his standard articles on the beginnings of the Virgin's special cult in Constantinople<sup>(1)</sup>, he focussed especially on the finding of the Virgin's robe and girdle in the fifth century, and their transference to the capital in the reign of Leo I. All the same, Baynes recognised, and other studies have emphasized<sup>(2)</sup>, that it was only from the early seventh century that the Virgin took her place as the tender protectress of her own 'humble city'. The siege of Constantinople by the Avars in AD 626 was, it has seemed, the moment when this special relationship was first fully realised, and confirmed by appearances of the Virgin herself to her people, as a veiled lady or as a warrior maiden fighting in the very battle<sup>(3)</sup>. It seems highly probable, however, that the year 626, climactic though it was for the self-consciousness of the city, merely focussed feelings of attachment to the Virgin which had been in operation in Constantinople already. I have tried in previous papers to give a context for this development and to suggest how it

(1) N. H. BAYNES, 'The Finding of the Virgin's Robe', *Mélanges Grégoire* (1949), pp. 87-95 (= *Byzantine Studies*, London (1955), pp. 240-247); 'The Supernatural Defenders of Constantinople', *AB* 67 (1949), pp. 165-177 (*ibid.*, pp. 248-266). See too A. FROLOW, 'La Dédicace de Constantinople dans la tradition byzantine', *Rev. de l'hist. des religions* 127 (1944), pp. 61-127.

(2) Averil CAMERON, 'The Theotokos in Sixth-Century Constantinople', *JTS* n.s. 29 (1978), pp. 79-108; C. BELTING-IHM, 'Sub matris tutela', *Abhandlungen der Heidelberger Akademie der Wiss., philosoph.-hist. Kl.* (1976); M. JUGIE, *La Mort et l'Assomption de la Sainte Vierge*, *Studi e Testi* 114 (Rome, 1944); A. WENGER, *L'Assomption de la Très Sainte Vierge dans la tradition byzantine du VI<sup>e</sup> au X<sup>e</sup> siècle*, *Archives de l'Orient chrétien* 5 (Paris, 1955).

(3) See CAMERON, *art. cit.* (n. 2); also 'Images of Authority. Elites, Icons and Cultural Change in late sixth-century Byzantium' (forthcoming); for the tangled stories of the Virgin's apparitions during the siege see A. PERTUSI (ed.), *Giorgio di Pisidia, Poemi I*, *Studia Patristica et Byzantina* 7 (Ettal, 1960), p. 143.

might be connected with the exactly contemporary use of icons both in the private and the public cults of the city<sup>(4)</sup>. I should now like to offer a translation and brief notes on a text quickly passed over by Baynes<sup>(5)</sup>, which has nevertheless much important information to contribute to the whole question of the relation of the Virgin to her city of Constantinople in the early seventh century.

This text is a revision and extension of the story of the finding of the Virgin's robe, brought up to date by an addition describing events which took place in AD 619, and probably 620, in words which are clearly those of a contemporary – indeed, the author calls his fellow-citizens to witness to his narration of how the Virgin saved the city in their own time and their own experience<sup>(6)</sup>. In AD 619 the Avars were raiding the outskirts of Constantinople, including even the Virgin's (unwalled) church at Blachernae<sup>(7)</sup>. In the course of removing gold and silver from Blachernae for safe-keeping, the Virgin's robe was removed also, contrary to the original intentions, and kept until the danger was over in Hagia Sophia. It was then formally returned to Blachernae, as the text describes, and a feast was instituted thereafter to commemorate the deposition<sup>(8)</sup>. During this time (the deposition probably took place

(4) See notes 2 and 3. For more examples of stories and beliefs about the Virgin in the later sixth century see H. CHADWICK, 'John Moschus and his friend Sophronius the Sophist', *JTS* n.s. 25 (1974), p. 65f.

(5) And omitted in the valuable study by Belting-Ihm (*op. cit.*, n. 2).

(6) Ed. E. COMBES, *Historia Haeresis Monothelitarum* (= *Bibliothecae Patrum Novum Auctuarium*), Paris, 1648, 751-88; more critically by C. LOPAREV, *Viz. Vrem.* 2 (1895), pp. 581ff. (with Russian translation. By far the best discussion of this text is that by WENGER, *op. cit.* (n. 2), pp. 111ff. The author's own experience – pp. 592, 608 Loparev, below, nn. 20, 29a.

(7) NICEPHORUS, *Breviarium*, p. 13.28f. de Boor; below, p. 49. These raids followed immediately after the ill-fated meeting of Heraclius with the Avar Khagan at Heraclea (*Chron. Pasch.*, p. 712.12f.; NICEPHORUS, p. 12.29f.; THEOPHANES, p. 301 de Boor). The date of AD 623 given by the *Chronicon Paschale* seems impossible, and Baynes ingeniously argued for 617 ('The Date of the Avar Surprise', *BZ* 21 (1912), pp. 110ff.), but 619 (Theophanes) seems preferable, then followed closely by the peace of 620 (THEOPHANES, p. 302; *Anon. Mai.*, p. 425 [for which see n. 19 below]).

(8) On 2nd July; below, p. 51 and see J. MATEOS, *Le Typikon de la Grande Eglise I* (Rome, 1962), p. 328. The annual procession went to the church of St. Laurence first (cf. below, p. 52). The Avar surprise at Heraclea was commemorated on 5th June – MATEOS, *Typikon*, I, p. 306.

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in the following summer, that is AD 620)<sup>(9)</sup> the robe revealed itself as a wonder-working relic guaranteeing the intimate connection between the Virgin herself and the city which possessed it. Thus we have here a precious document, neglected up to now, which proves the importance of the cult of the Virgin's robe and her personal protection of the city before the events of AD 626 brought her fully to the fore as a city patron, and warranted both the contemporary reworking of the Akathistos hymn and the whole familiar development of Marian homiletic and hymnography from the eighth century on<sup>(10)</sup>. I think too that the language of this text makes it plain that the ground was very well prepared for these attitudes, and especially for the expression of the personal attachment of city and divine patron, or in Baynes's phrase, 'supernatural defender', well before even AD 619.

My object here is a modest one, simply to make this interesting text more readily available and to point out certain contributions it can make to the discussion so far. But first, the date and authorship. The context of the events mentioned in the text is clear<sup>(11)</sup>: the Avars are attacking the suburbs of Constantinople, and our author refers to a plan of the emperor to meet the Khagan<sup>(12)</sup>. This meeting took place at Heraclea, with great pomp on the Byzantine side; Heraclius took with him the whole apparatus of the imperial court including the wherewithal to hold circus races<sup>(13)</sup>. Not surprisingly,

(9) WENGER, *op. cit.* (n. 2), p. 121, thinks the robe was returned within a month, i.e. on July 2nd, AD 619, but this seems impossibly short chronology. A peace treaty signed in 620 (n. 7) would on the other hand provide a good context for the deposition.

(10) For all of this see CAMERON, *art. cit.* (n. 2); JUGIE, *op. cit. (ibid.)*. The Akathistos hymn was given a new preface and used as the hymn of thanksgiving for the city's deliverance by the Virgin from the siege of AD 626 – E. WELLESZ, 'The Akathistos', *DOP* 9-10 (1955-56), pp. 143ff.; C. A. TRYPANIS, *Fourteen Early Byzantine Cantica*, *Wiener Byzantinische Studien* 5 (1968), pp. 17ff.

(11) Established by A. VASILIEVSKI, *Viz. Vrem.* 3 (1896), pp. 83-95; see too WENGER, *op. cit.* (n. 2), p. 123.

(12) Below, p. 49; see note 7 above.

(13) *Chron. Pasch.*, p. 712f.; NICEPHORUS, p. 13. See Alan CAMERON, *Circus Factions* (Oxford, 1976), p. 257. This surprise attack has been the basis of an attempt to date the *Strategicon* ascribed to Maurice to the reign of Heraclius and indeed to ascribe it to Heraclius himself (E. DARKÓ, 'Influences Touraniennes sur l'évolution de l'art militaire des Grecs, des Romains et des Byzantins', *Byzantion*

our author quickly changes the subject after mentioning this meeting<sup>(14)</sup>, for the Avars set an ambush and Heraclius escaped only by ignominious flight, carrying his crown under his arm<sup>(15)</sup>. Immediately after this the Avars turned to attack the city outskirts, and entered the churches of SS. Cosmas and Damian at Blachernae and St. Michael at Promotus<sup>(16)</sup>. Clearly this is the context for the decision to remove the treasures from the Blachernae church, as Vasilievski saw long ago<sup>(17)</sup>. Reinforced by the excellent work of Wenger, Vasilievski's arguments have proved beyond all doubt that our text refers to AD 619. We need now only make two observations. First, this text clearly marks the *beginnings* of a cult, and the context for the 'take-off' of Constantinopolitan devotion to the Virgin's robe as a wonder-working relic we know (despite the fifth-century translation) to have been the early seventh century<sup>(18)</sup>. Second, while numerous manuscripts preserve this text only anonymously, others specifically attribute it to one Theodore Syncellus, whom we know with a fair degree of certainty to have been both an emissary to the Avar Khagan in AD 626 and the author of the homily celebrating the city's deliverance from the Avar siege of that year<sup>(19)</sup>. The stylistic and contextual arguments

12 (1937), pp. 119ff.), but cavalry, essential to Darkó's argument, are not mentioned in the sources for the Avar surprise.

(14) Below, p. 49, and similarly *Anon. Mai.* p. 425.

(15) NICEPHORUS, p. 13.

(16) *Chron. Pasch.*, p. 713.9f. The church of SS. Cosmas and Damian was on the Golden Horn at Eyup (R. JANIN, *La Géographie ecclésiastique de l'empire byzantin I: Les Églises et les monastères*, 2nd ed. (Paris, 1969), pp. 286-87 – but the incident did not take place in AD 626). For St. Michael at Promotus, see JANIN, p. 344, cf. 339. Nicephorus, p. 14, says that the Avars reached the Hebdomon and the bridge over the Barbyssos.

(17) *Art. cit.* (n. 11), esp. p. 90f. Loparev had wrongly identified the context as the siege of Constantinople in AD 860 (followed by Jugie, pp. 688f., but see WENGER, *op. cit.* (n. 2), p. 112f., 119f.; A. A. VASILIEV, *The Russian Attack on Constantinople in 860* (Cambridge, Mass., 1946), pp. 105-106.

(18) BELTING-IRM, *op. cit.* (n. 2), pp. 42f., 46f. puts it too late (see n. 47 below). The late sixth and early seventh centuries saw a massive development in the cult of the Virgin in Constantinople – see my articles cited in nn. 2 and 3.

(19) WENGER, *op. cit.* (n. 2), p. 116f.; F. BARISIĆ, 'Le Siège de Constantinople par les Avars et les Slaves en 626', *Byzantion* 24, (1954), p. 373, n. 2. The homily describing the siege of 626 is edited by A. MAL, *Opera Patrum Bibliotheca* (Rome, 1863), pp. 423ff., and L. STERNBACH, *Analecta Avarica* (Cairo, 1901)

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for the supposition that the same Theodore wrote both texts have been set out with great cogency by Wenger, and although there are differences of manner between the two texts (the 626 text is far more rhetorical, flowery and emotional), I think the similarities are striking enough to show at least that a ninth-century date for our present one can be absolutely ruled out. It is still just conceivable that the two were written by different people, and that the name Theodore was attached to the 619 text on the analogy of the 626 homily, but both openly betray the vividness of eye-witness accounts<sup>(20)</sup> and must clearly be kept together chronologically.

The most important contribution of this text is to the history of the Virgin's robe in Constantinople. Our first testimony to the properties of the robe in fact comes from Gregory of Tours in the late sixth century<sup>(21)</sup> – a fact not so surprising as it might seem when we remember that it is Gregory too who first testifies in the West (in the same work) to the story of the Virgin's Assumption<sup>(22)</sup>. The recognition of the Virgin's dormition in Constantinople in the late sixth century and the development of a belief in her robe as a miraculous relic belong together, as part of a more generalised growth in her cult in the capital<sup>(23)</sup>, which was after all but a special

pp. 2-24, and translated into French by F. MAKK, *Acta Universitatis Szegediensis, Acta Antiqua et Archaeologica* 19, *Opuscula Byzantina* 3 (Szeged, 1975), with reprint of Sternbach's (very rare) text. The emissaries to the Avar Khagan – *Chron. Pasch.*, p. 721 ff.

(20) See WENGER, *op. cit.* (n. 2), p. 117f. Autopsy – below, n. 32; *Anon. Mai.*, p. 430 (the experiences of the envoys to the Khagan), p. 435.

(21) GREG. TUR., *De gloria martyrum*, I.10; see BELTING-IHM, *op. cit.* (n. 2), p. 38. Evagrius has the same story as Gregory, but minus the Virgin's robe (*HE* IV.36); see BELTING-IHM, and also CHADWICK, *art. cit.* (n. 4), p. 48. It belongs in the reign of Justinian because of the reference to the patriarch Menas, but recurs, misplaced to Justin II, in GEORGE MONACHUS, II, pp. 655-6 de Boor, and CEDRENIUS, I, pp. 686-7 Bonn. Gregory could well have derived his mention of the robe from Byzantine sources, as he did other contemporary Eastern stories. See Averil CAMERON, 'The Byzantine Sources of Gregory of Tours', *JTS* n.s. 26 (1975), pp. 421ff. One does not need to suppose a written source, either Greek or Latin (so BELTING-IHM, p. 39).

(22) *De gloria martyrum*, I.4; see JUGIE, *op. cit.* (n. 2), p. 108; WENGER, *op. cit.* (n. 2), p. 66, but cf. *JTS* n.s. 29 (1978), p. 93.

(23) *JTS* n.s. 29 (1978), pp. 79 ff. As the feasts here established add to the contemporary Eastern crystallisation of a calendar of the feasts of the Virgin – see R. LAURENTIN, *Court Traité de théologie mariale*, 4th ed. (Paris, 1959), pp. 48ff.

application of the widespread growth in the cult that was taking place in the rest of the empire. It was not only in AD 626, then, that the robe was imbued with a special power for the city's safety; indeed, there is no contemporary evidence that the robe left Blachernae in 626, though the church was still unwalled, and references to it in the sources for that year are likely to be late retrojections into a situation where the function of the robe as a channel for the Virgin's saving powers had passed for the occasion to icons<sup>(24)</sup>. But that is not to diminish the robe's importance or its meaning, which is what our text conveys. Before AD 626, then, the Virgin's robe at Blachernae served as the token of a special relation of the Virgin to the city, conceived in the language of belonging, and conveying the idea that the Virgin, come what may, would save her own city. This notion, which we do not yet find in the sixth century, can first be seen – and seen with the utmost vividness – in this text.

Unfortunately our text does not help us very much, however, to understand whether there was yet a famous icon at Blachernae in the mode later known as the Blachernitissa, in which the Virgin raises her arms and thus extends her protecting robe<sup>(25)</sup>. That thanks were given after the siege of AD 626 to the Virgin at Blachernae<sup>(26)</sup> does not prove that a Blachernae icon was used in the

(24) Blachernae was walled after 626 – *Chron. Pasch.*, p. 726. Icons in the siege of 626 – *art. cit.* (n. 3), and PERTUSI, *loc. cit. (ibid.)*. The robe in 626 – WENGER, *op. cit.* (n. 2), p. 122. Thus I would not follow TRYPANIS, *op. cit.* (n. 10), p. 87f., when he connects the allusion to the protection given to Constantinople by the Virgin's robe in the kontakion *On the Holy Fathers* (TRYPANIS, no. VII), str. ii, 6ff., with the year AD 626 (see too p. 116) and uses this to date the hymn. I would agree that the canticum belongs to the seventh century (TRYPANIS, p. 88), but the allusion is to AD 619, not 626. However, the hymn does give further proof of the devotion which the robe had attracted in Constantinople well before the eighth century (below, n. 47).

(25) For this iconography see J. EBERSOLT, *Constantinople* (Paris, 1951), pp. 44ff.; A. GRABAR, 'Remarques sur l'iconographie byzantine de la Vierge', *Cahiers archéologiques* 26 (1977), pp. 169-178; 'Une Source d'inspiration de l'iconographie byzantine tardive: les cérémonies du culte de la Vierge', *ibid.*, 25 (1976), p. 147f. The later iconography of the Virgin's robe: BELTING-IHM, *op. cit.* (n. 2); GRABAR, *Cahiers archéol.* 25 (1976), pp. 152ff.; S. DER NERSESSIAN, 'The Illustrations of the Metaphrastian Menologium', *Late Classical and Medieval Studies in Honor of A. M. Friend, Jr.* (Princeton, 1955), pp. 222ff.

(26) GEORGE OF PISIDIA, *AP* I, 120-121; *Anon. Mai.*, p. 437. The final victory in 626 was won in front of the Blachernae church (cf. *Anon. Mai.*, p. 43), and this is



siege, or that if it was, it was of this type. Certainly icons of the Virgin were centrally important in the 626 siege, but the homily of Theodore suggests rather that they were specially painted for the occasion<sup>(27)</sup>. Christa Belting-Ihm believes that the apse mosaic of the Blachernae church may already have carried a portrait of the Virgin of the type so familiar later<sup>(28)</sup>. Yet the early history of the great church and its treasures remains curiously obscure, and I would hesitate to suppose that this iconography preceded literary allusions, especially at a time when the iconography of the Virgin in general still remained strictly limited<sup>(29)</sup>. But our present text, firmly localising its description at the Blachernae church, allows us to see the first stages in the development of one of the longest-lasting and best-loved ways of representing the Virgin in Byzantine history, as it allows us also to weave another strand into the shadowy story of the growing recognition and acceptance of the feasts of the Virgin in the Eastern church in the late sixth and early seventh centuries, and to see a little more clearly again how with these religious ceremonies and commemorative occasions the emperors of that period were coming to be still more closely identified with the religious life and the religious calendar of the city of Constantinople.

TRANSLATION<sup>(30)</sup>

p. 592 (col. 774 Combefis) l. These then were the miracles with which the  
Loparev Theotokos at Blachernae<sup>(31)</sup> endowed the city; but as for those that

quite enough to account for the special place of Blachernae in the memory of the siege.

(27) *Anon. Mai.* p. 427.

(28) *Op. cit.* (n. 2), pp. 49-50; see too C. Ihm, *Die Programme der christlichen Apsismalerei vom vierten Jahrhundert bis zur Mitte des achten Jahrhunderts* (*Forschungen zur Kunstgeschichte und christlichen Archäologie* 5) (Wiesbaden, 1960), pp. 63, 65.

(29) See n. 47.

(30) The text translated is that given by LOPAREV, *Viz. Prem.* 2 (1895), pp. 592-612, with minor alterations of punctuation only. Jugie and Wenger both lament the lack of a critical edition (WENGER, p. 114), but Loparev knew a fuller range of MSS., including *Monac. gr.* 146, which attributes the text to Theodore Syncellus. Undoubtedly a new reading of the MSS. could improve the text in several places, but for the moment I have thought it best to translate Loparev's text as it stands; I give his page numbers in the margins.

(31) Only now perhaps did Blachernae come fully into its own as the

took place in our own day, which we all witnessed and saw ourselves<sup>(32)</sup>, I will go on to narrate them.

2. There was a time when things were going well for us and there was no warfare to terrify us; but the summit of prosperity, as they say, was changed through our carelessness, and tripped us up, for we were not able to maintain our prosperity unsullied. So there came upon us many just and different stings from God to reprove us and impel us to stop our sinfulness. But one dreadful glittering sword assailed us and attacked us, strong enough to destroy the whole world with its stroke. But 'who can utter your mighty acts, Lord, or who can shew forth your famous praises?'<sup>(33)</sup> For you said to the wave which was then directed against your people 'Peace, be still'<sup>(34)</sup>, and 'thus far shalt thou come and no further, and here shall your waves be stayed'<sup>(35)</sup>. And it was decided, and the most pious emperor resolved, that the leader of those powerful peoples should go to see him face to face to confirm a peace treaty<sup>(36)</sup>. As for what followed, let other books<sup>(37)</sup> tell it; for our narrative was already directed towards a different object.

3. When therefore that locust fell upon and devastated everything around the city<sup>(38)</sup>, the emperor left the palace and, prone on the ground and dressed as a private citizen in the church of the Theotokos called Jerusalem<sup>(39)</sup>, which is inside the gate called Golden (for it really is), struggled and laboured to his utmost, pouring forth tears<sup>(40)</sup>. And the patriarch too left his holy

emotional centre of the cult of the Virgin in Constantinople, and it seems as though the Virgin's powers were associated with her robe before they were linked to a special icon (BELTING-IHM, *op. cit.* (n. 2), p. 50). See WENGER, *op. cit.* (n. 2), p. 112, for the vagueness of our information about the early history of Blachernae, and pp. 113ff. for a convincing proof that this text is prior to the two other continuations of the finding story, which cannot therefore stand as evidence for devotion to the Virgin's robe in the sixth century (contra BAYNES, *art. cit.* (n. 1), p. 245f.). The phrase 'the Virgin at Blachernae' is a strikingly unusual (for this date) example of a strictly localised advocacy.

(32) *Anon. Mai.* p. 435 αὐτόντας γὰρ καὶ θεσποῖ (the same phrase as here).

(33) At Heraclea (NICEPHORUS, pp. 12-13 - p. 45 above).

(34) 'Other books' - the story is told in the contemporary *Chronicon Paschale* (p. 712f.), and Theodore himself refers to it again (*Anon. Mai.* p. 425).

(35) *Chron. Pasch.*, p. 713; NICEPHORUS, p. 13.

(36) JANIN, *op. cit.* (n. 16), p. 185f.

(37) Tears as a sign of piety: cf. pp. 602, 603, 606-7 LOPAREV.



p. 595 residence<sup>(38)</sup> and joined in the emperor's agony in the same church with prayers and entreaties by day and night. And all the people left behind in the city, men and women and those who were still children<sup>(39)</sup>, offered prayers and lamentations in churches of the Theotokos everywhere, desperately asking to escape the fate that was before their eyes.

p. 596 4. And God did not fail to hear their entreaty, or withhold His mercy in the midst of His anger, nor remove His compassion from us. No, He showed us that everything is subject to Him and in His power, and that He directs everything by the power of His will. So, when the onslaught of that dread and deadly disease was still beginning, and no help was expected, in human terms, but our enemies were laying waste and overrunning everything in front of the city wall, churches as well as everything else, some of our people decided that it would be sensible to take the initiative and remove the gold and silver treasure in the church of Blachernae, lest our enemies should dare to overrun that too with their barbarian and greedy nature.

p. 597 5. But those who were appointed to remove this holy treasure acted in a more warlike and impetuous spirit than they should have done: for besides removing all the other gold and silver, breaking it down with picks and axes and other weapons of the kind, they dared actually to lay hands on this divine casket<sup>(40)</sup>, and to bring

(38) I.e. the patriarchal palace, rebuilt after a fire by John Scholasticus (patriarch AD 565-77); see JOHN OF EPHEBUS, *HE* II.34, cf. II.3, 13, 27 etc. See C. MANGO, *The Brazen House* (Copenhagen, 1959), p. 52f.; R. CORMACK and E. J. W. HAWKINS, 'The Mosaics of St. Sophia at Istanbul: the rooms above the Southwest vestibule and ramp', *DOP* 31 (1977), pp. 177-251, esp. 247ff.

(39) A cliché of hagiography as of panegyric; cf. p. 601 LOPAREV, and *Anon. Mai.*, pp. 425, 426-7, 433.

(40) For the *soros* see WENGER, *op. cit.* (n. 2), pp. 132ff. It was a casket which could be used as an altar and compared to the Ark of the Covenant. But the word is also sometimes used for the chapel in which the reliquary stood – e.g. MATEOS, *Typikon*, I, p. 329, where Mateos glosses it with the words 'la chapelle de'. BELTING, *op. cit.* (n. 2), pp. 49-50, regards it as a martyrium, which would appropriately contain a mosaic of the Virgin. Both the Blachernae church and the Virgin's other main church of Chalkoprateia (where her girdle was kept) had recently been restored by Justin II and Sophia, who are said to have built a *soros* at Chalkoprateia (PREGER, *Patris CP* III, p. 263.5, cf. JANIN, *op. cit.* (n. 16), pp. 166f., 237f.). The chapel at Blachernae had been built by Leo I and contained

into the light then the wonder previously hidden from all. And inside the visible casket, which is made of gold and silver, was found a stone casket, shining with brightness, and inside this at the top<sup>(41)</sup> was found lying the divine treasure, preserved safe in another little casket.

p. 598 6. So those who had broken down the gold and silver treasure of the divine church dared precipitately to open this holy little casket and immediately encountered such a strong smell of perfume that the entire church was filled with it. They saw a tiny piece of imperial purple which they assumed was the robe of the Theotokos. And yes, yes, they actually cut off a piece of the purple, the robe as they thought, thinking to steal it. But when this divine cloth came into the holy hands of the patriarch, he at once revealed the matter to the pious emperor. And he ran outside in great fear and prostrated himself, clinging to him, and asked the patriarch to do what was fitting of his own initiative. And the patriarch placed secure seals upon it and deposited this sacred little casket in the holy church treasury of the Great Church of God with the appropriate honour and suitable awe.

p. 599 7. And when the sun of God's mercy rose again upon us and released us from the storm that had come upon us, then the worthy patriarch, again taking as his assistant our most pious emperor, again filled all the sacred place<sup>(42)</sup> with greater care. He restored all the treasure contained therein, and appointing a fixed, or rather a named holy day<sup>(43)</sup>, on which he nobly decided to restore the holy treasure to its own place, he called together in a lofty decree all the assembly of patriarchs, the clergy and the laity, men and women and those holding offices and ranks, and all who lived in private life. 'Here, priests and people', he said, 'see the greatness of Christ our God. Come and see the treasure till now hidden: here, prostrate yourselves before the most holy gift which the Theotokos has given to the city for its safety'.

p. 600

a mosaic depicting an enthroned Virgin flanked by Leo and his family (WENGER, *REB* 10 (1952), pp. 54-59).

(41) Literally 'north': cf. also p. 607 LOPAREV.

(42) I.e. the church of Blachernae. He restored all the gold and silver till it was even better than before.

(43) 2nd July (n. 8 above).

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8. And when the decreed named day dawned, he performed the ceaseless holy singing of hymns throughout the whole night in this sacred shrine<sup>(44)</sup>. And he caused the same to take place also in the church of the most holy martyr St. Laurence<sup>(45)</sup>. For there when the sun set one day before the festival he brought forth the holy treasure for all to adore. It was covered and could not be seen by the eyes of men. And every age and all generations of men who dwelt in this capital city were judged fit to take part in such adoration throughout the night.

9. And when the day came and the sun lit up the sky with its rays, the Simeon of our<sup>(46)</sup> time took in his arms the grace given to our generation and with psalms and hymns and with all the company of the church proceeded to the most holy church of the Theotokos at Blachernae. All the people and the clergy and the company of the patriarchs preceded and accompanied him so that there was almost even felt to be danger from the pushing of the crowd that went along with him. But this too the Theotokos mercifully granted – she preserved safe all those who went along.

10. And when, with difficulty and in great danger, the patriarch, carrying in his hands the divine wonder was inside the most holy church, in which the divine casket stands even now, – for the people kept running up and pressing close and trying to tear off a scrap of the wonder, – the patriarch's passage < was made > easy<sup>(47)</sup>. At once one common cry rose from the people at the right hour, as they cried 'Lord have mercy'. And the stream of tears, like a shower of rain<sup>(48)</sup> drenched the floor of the holy place.

11. So the the patriarch deposited the treasure which he held in

(44) Apparently Blachernae; but the patriarch himself and the procession go from St. Laurence to Blachernae only at dawn – p. 601.

(45) This vigil at the church of St. Laurence continued to be part of the annual celebration: MATEOS, *Typikon*, I, p. 328. *PROC., Aed.* I.6, says that Justinian restored a church of the martyr St. Laurence on the Golden Horn near to Blachernae; despite the arguments of Janin, *op. cit.* (n. 16), p. 300f., it does not seem likely that this was different from the martyrion built by Pulcheria, which was also on the Golden Horn (JANIN, p. 301f.).

(46) I.e. the patriarch Sergius. Cf. *Anon. Mai.*, pp. 426, 427, 428, etc.

(47) Either something has dropped out, or the construction has become interrupted in the speed of the narrative.

(48) CORIPPUS, *Iust.* I.161-162; III.44f.

the holy sanctuary, hidden from view. And throwing himself wholly on to the holy floor he spoke to God what was fitting and what his mind told him, asking and [entreating], and praying and beseeching, with a stream of tears. All the people were still chanting the 'Lord have mercy', and rising up from his prayer and lifting his hands up to heaven and again pouring out earnest supplication, he laid his trembling hands, himself bathed in sweat, on that holy wonder. Opening up the seals which he himself had placed there originally, he found imperial purple wrapped with myrrh and other perfumes. And opening that he found the robe of the true empress<sup>(49)</sup>, the Mother of God, shining out with her own grace and power.

12. And see the divine miracles of the Word of God! For there was seen at once the truth of the wonder and the manifest power of the Theotokos. For the imperial purple was totally destroyed and worn away, although silk cloth lasts a long time. But the divine robe, woven from perishable wool – both warp and woof the same wool of the same colour – had suffered no destruction at all, but was completely intact, whole and indestructible, evidence of the indestructibility and untouchability of the indestructibility and untouchability of the wearer, as one would fully expect.

13. For naturally, naturally, she who had a pure and indestructible soul and body and thought and character and words and ways and spirit itself, untouched by any dirt and free of every blemish, bestowed her indestructibility also on her garments. For if the shadow of Peter and the handkerchiefs and aprons that had touched the flesh of Paul drove away every disease and weakness from the sick<sup>(d)</sup><sup>(50)</sup>, how likely it was that this divine and holy garment should partake of grace, when we believe that it not only clothed the Mother of God, but that in it she actually wrapped the Word of God

(d) cf. Acts 19.12

(49) The Virgin as queen – *JTS* n.s. 29 (1978), p. 92; cf. p. 606 LOPAREV (the 'truly royal' robe). Cf. *Anon. Mai.*, p. 430 – Christ is asked to look down from His throne in heaven. In Romanos's *carm.* 11, str. β'3 the Virgin says τοῦ γὰρ κόσμου βασιλείῳ. The Virgin was often represented in visions as a woman in a purple robe – see CHADWICK, *art. cit.* (n. 4), p. 65, n. 5.

(50) Acts 19.12 'So that from his body (sc. Paul) were brought unto them handkerchiefs or aprons, and the diseases departed from them, and the evil spirits went out of them'. See AMMONIUS, *comm. ad loc.* (PL 85.1576), who explains the passage and also refers to the σκίαι of the Apostles, as here.



p. 606 Himself, when he was a little child and gave him milk<sup>(51)</sup>. Whence rightly this divine and truly royal garment is not only the cure for every illness, but justly is incorruptible and indestructible, proclaiming the indestructibility and incorruptibility of its wearer.

p. 607 14. Seeing all of this then in his mind and with the eyes of the spirit<sup>(52)</sup> and as if inspired by joy, the patriarch did not conceal in himself the richness of the grace. He did not leave the matter unwitnessed, keeping its power to himself alone, but revealed the grace to the whole company of the church, trembling all over and weeping streams of tears, lifting the wonder with trembling hands, as the people again with cries and mingled chants cried without ceasing in unison the 'Lord have mercy'.

15. But when what pertained to that divine and dread hour and sight had been done with sufficient order and fitness, again in the sight of the priests, clergy and people, the patriarch wrapped the divine garment in the piece of imperial purple and as before placed it in the top part of the holy casket in the little casket where it lay.

p. 608 16. When this had been done in this manner, the rest of the all-holy service took place and the accustomed reading of the Holy Scriptures and the divine reciting of the all-holy liturgy. Again the patriarch went forward into the very holy sanctuary of the casket, which he himself had renewed and sanctified, partaking of and sharing with all the all-body and life-giving mysteries of the bloodless sacrifice, of which he was the celebrant according to holy decree, and giving a blessing to the people, he dismissed them all, praising and proclaiming the greatness of God and His unknowable glory. And he decreed that this same fixed festival of festivals should take place in future years among the festivals and ceremonies of the Theotokos celebrated at Blachernae<sup>(53)</sup>.

(51) The Virgin's milk: this is a theme that was to be more often developed later, as the relation of the Virgin and her Son could be perceived in more directly human and physical terms – see e.g. GERMANUS OF CONSTANTINOPLE (8th c.), *PG* 98.377, on the Virgin's girdle. In the sixth century the Virgin was shown giving the Child the breast at Saqqara and Bawit, but not yet outside Egypt (G. WELLEN, *Theotokos, Eine ikonographische Abhandlung über das Gottesmutterbild in frühchristlicher Zeit* (Utrecht/Amsterdam, 1961), p. 164.

(52) Cf. *Anon. Mai*, p. 427 ἡ δὲ πάλιν ἐβόα πρὸς τὴν πάρθενον, δακρύουσα, στόματι χρωμένη νεκρῷ, τοῦ ἱεράρχου τῷ πνεύματι.

(53) For these, see JANIN, *op. cit.* (n. 16), p. 169f.

p. 609 17. This, then, is the account, according to my humble ability, of the divine mysteries, witnesses and participants, having as you know in itself a source and indication of great good, but altogether feeble and faint and pale, showing from afar the character and the rashness of the writer. But the divine mysteries will not be diminished by this, or be thought less than their own loftiness: they remain great and hard to describe, as though inseparable from their own nobility even when obscured under a clay pot – the present feebleness of the writer. For surely there will be another who really knows how to gild a tale, and who will be able, like the famous Bezalel<sup>(54)</sup>, to adorn a holy tent that can contain and hold these divine mysteries.

p. 610 18. But, O all-holy and immortal and pure lady, whom God the Father made holy and chose and judged worthy that his coeternal and consubstantial Word should take flesh through you, whom the Word of God Who existed in the beginning with the Father has truly made His mother after the flesh, in whom the holy and life-giving Spirit settled, preserve your grace eternally for your city and let not in future the eye of man behold the tottering of the divine church or the desertion of this your humble city<sup>(55)</sup>. Turn away from it every barbarian of whatever race, who plots hostility against it, making manifest that the city is fortified by your power<sup>(56)</sup>. And

(54) The architect of the Tabernacle – Exodus, 31.2f. (cf. 'tent of meeting'). See too TRYPANIS, *op. cit.* (n. 10), p. 144 (no. XII) for the same image.

(55) The sense of the city as belonging to the Virgin is already very strong here (see FROLOW, *art. cit.* (n. 1), p. 96, and her protection is symbolised by her robe. The 8th century is clearly too late as a starting point for this belief (BELTING-IHM, *op. cit.* (n. 2), p. 46 'schon im 8. Jahrhundert, sicher aber im 9. und 10. Jahrhundert in Konstantinopel'; see too pp. 42ff. and above, n. 26). Its iconographical development as usual followed rather than preceded its literary expression and emotional acceptance. In the same way the cult of the Virgin as actually experienced in the sixth century allowed more differentiation than was yet admitted in the iconography, which until the late sixth century normally showed the Virgin only enthroned and with the Child (see the articles cited in notes 2 and 3).

(56) For the terminology of the Virgin as a wall of defence for the city of Constantinople see 'Images of Authority' (n. 3); BELTING-IHM, *op. cit.* (n. 2), p. 47. It is especially well developed in the 7th homily of Photius on the siege of Constantinople in AD 860 (trans. J. MANGO, *The Homilies of Photius* (Washington, D.C., 1958), p. 102f.); but already in the Akathistos the Virgin is



p. 612 whatever souls and cities have been defeated by barbarians, raise them all and redeem them, for you have power to do anything. And direct lasting peace for those who dwell in your city, driving away all civil strife from it. Cleanse it from hunger and disease, lady, fire and earthquake and any other thing that has the power to harm, giving it the wealth of your protection for ever. Give a peaceful and long reign to our pious emperors<sup>(57)</sup>. Preserve the holy patriarch to lighten his people for a long life. And to all of us, as we pray together and entreat you separately for ourselves, as the fountain of life, the treasury of salvation, bestow your kindness both on the living and the dead, for you have access<sup>(58)</sup> to Christ our God who took flesh through you, through Whom and with Whom glory is owed to His immortal Father and all-holy and life-giving Spirit now and ever and for all ages, Amen.

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the σκέπη τοῦ κόσμου (str. *ia'*, and see BELTING-İHM, pp. 42-43), as she is τῶν ἀνθρώπων ἡ σκέπη in the troparion sung on 2nd July (MATEOS, *Typikon*, I, p. 328). Cf. *Anon. Mai.*, p. 426 τὴν πόλιν... ἣν ἡ παρθένος τετείχηκεν. Cf. Germanus (8th c.) addressing the Virgin's girdle: 'you are our strength and our help, our wall and fortress...' (PG 98.377). See also the seventh-century kontakion on the Assumption (Trypanis, *op. cit.* (n. 10), no. X, pp. 117ff., first addressing Christ with the words τεύχισον μου τὰς φρένας and then referring to the Virgin as the τεύχος τοῦ κόσμου.

(57) Cf. also pp. 593, 599 LOPAREV. In AD 629 Heraclius formally adopted the title ὁ πιστός ἐν Χριστῷ βασιλεὺς; see I. SHAHID, 'The Iranian Factor in Byzantium during the Reign of Heraclius', *DOP* 26 (1972), pp. 295, 317-20; 'Images of Authority' (n. 3), p. 000. For πιστοὶ βασιλεῖς of Heraclius and his son Constantine see too TRYPANIS, *op. cit.* (n. 10), no. XIII, Proem. 3 (*On the Raising of the Holy Cross*, written between AD 614 and 628).

(58) *παρησία* – the Virgin's direct access to God. Cf. Akathistos hymn, str. γ' and ιη'. Saints and holy men have *παρησία* with God (e.g. JOHN OF EPHEBUS, *Lives of the Eastern Saints*, I, PO 17.1, pp. 23, 34; II, PO 18.4, pp. 531, 533, 631, 639); thus the Virgin's powers of access will be the closest of all. See S. DER NERSESSIAN, 'Two Images of the Virgin in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection', *DOP* 14 (1960), pp. 73ff. Note that here the Virgin is the recipient of direct prayer herself (see too CORIPPUS, *Iust.* II.52f.) and credited with miraculous power (so too in *Anon. Mai.*), whereas in the account of the siege of 626 in the *Chronicon Paschale* the author is careful to ascribe the city's deliverance not to the Virgin directly but only to her intercession with God (*Chron. Pasch.*, pp. 716ff. – the *προσέλευ* of the Virgin).

## IMAGES OF AUTHORITY: ELITES AND ICONS IN LATE SIXTH-CENTURY BYZANTIUM\*

EXCEPT AMONG ART HISTORIANS, BYZANTIUM IN THE LATER SIXTH century has not so far shared in the vogue which the seventh century now enjoys.<sup>1</sup> Yet students of Iconoclasm, arguably the major manifestation of the problem of change and continuity in early medieval Byzantium, have not failed to see that one must begin with the rise of icons before going on to the reasons for subsequent attacks upon them. And it is agreed that the first great increase in devotion to icons falls squarely in the second half of the sixth century. A number of basic arguments of Peter Brown,<sup>2</sup> have shown beyond doubt that basic changes were taking place in Byzantine culture in these years. It ought then to be possible to focus these changes more clearly against the contemporary background. But we have to face the absence of a full and detailed social history.<sup>3</sup> The purpose of this paper, then, must be preliminary: to set out a framework for the late sixth century in which religious history and its expression in contemporary art are more firmly "embedded" in their context.

We have to return to the role of the court and of Constantinople. I shall argue that in these years, between the death of Justinian in 565 and the reign of Heraclius (610-41), the emperors who succeeded to a

\* This paper was written at the Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton, where I profited greatly from discussion with friends, especially Natalie Z. Davis, Ronald Inden and William H. Sewell, Jr. A version was delivered at the Thirteenth Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies (joint meeting with the Classical Association), Birmingham, April 1979.

<sup>1</sup> Debate on the "dark age" of the seventh century is lively: see *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, xiii (1959) (a special volume); and more recently, J. Haldon, "Some Remarks on the Background to the Iconoclastic Controversy", *Byzantinoslavica*, xxxviii (1977), pp. 161-84; F. Winkelman et al., *Byzanz im 7. Jahrhundert* (Berliner byzantinische Arbeiten, xlviii, Berlin, 1978); R.-J. Lilie, *Die byzantinische Reaktion auf die Ausbreitung der Araber* (Miscellanea byzantina monacensia, xxii, Munich, 1976).

<sup>2</sup> Principally E. Kitzinger, "The Cult of Images in the Period before Iconoclasm", *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, viii (1954), pp. 85-150; A. Grabar, *L'iconoclasme byzantin* (Paris, 1957), pp. 21 ff.; P. Brown, "A Dark-Age Crisis: Aspects of the Iconoclastic Controversy", *Eng. Hist. Rev.*, lxxxviii (1973), pp. 1-34.

<sup>3</sup> Work of this kind is sadly lacking even for the reign of Justinian, but see now E. Patlagean, *Pauvreté économique et pauvreté sociale à Byzance, IV<sup>e</sup>-VII<sup>e</sup> siècles* (Paris, 1977). G. Weiss, "Antike und Byzanz: Die Kontinuität der Gesellschaftsstruktur", *Historische Zeitschrift*, ccxxiv (1977), pp. 59-60, operates at a rather high level of generality, while F. Tinnefeld, *Die frühbyzantinische Gesellschaft* (Munich, 1977), is conceived only as a modest handbook.



throne weakened by a sense of failure and an empire neglected by the aged Justinian made a real change in the emphasis of Byzantine rule. Justin II, Tiberius and Maurice evolved a style of governing which integrated the imperial court with contemporary taste, and which gave the Byzantine monarchy sufficient sense of identity and single-mindedness to enable it to ride out coming blows of ever-increasing magnitude. The Iconoclast emperors of the eighth century were not, therefore, reimposing the imperial iron fist out of the blue.<sup>4</sup> A strength and unity can clearly be seen already in the reigns of the late sixth-century emperors; consequently, however close it came to the edge in the dark years of the seventh century, Constantinople did not capitulate. In the face of the Persian invasions of the early seventh century which put a sharp curb on urban life in Asia Minor,<sup>5</sup> and still more the onslaught of the armies of Islam which so rapidly detached Constantinople from most of its previous possessions, not much more than survival could be hoped for. The remaining provinces of the Byzantine empire survived in a changed form. But Constantinople as the centre of government pulled through the crisis too. We must now ask where the roots of that survival lay.

I shall argue that the late sixth century was crucial. It was a time when the Byzantine emperors in the capital presided over a process of cultural integration by which the élite and its rulers came to be fully identified. In this society such integration could only be expressed in religious terms. So it happened that classical culture for a time quietly took a back seat. Still practised by the élite of Justinian's day, it had even then been dangerously associated with paganism. Such a luxury could no longer be permitted. Imperial historians and poets who had previously striven to keep up "classical" styles of writing now presented their subjects unblushingly within the terms of Old Testament typology; when classical culture came back into fashion, after the years of struggle, it was less a real alternative than a scholarly revival. The sixth-century emperors lent their active patronage to religious developments already under way; they were quick to ally icons with imperial ceremony, and to foster the emergence of the Virgin as the protectress of Constantinople by making her their own protectress too. Their own ceremonial increased in impact and complexity, and set the imperial players in a scenario ever more religious in tone.<sup>6</sup> By means of

<sup>4</sup> Brown, "A Dark-Age Crisis", pp. 23 ff., makes the events of the late seventh century the trigger for imperial reaction.

<sup>5</sup> See Clive Foss, "The Persians in Asia Minor and the End of Antiquity", *Eng. Hist. Rev.*, xc (1975), pp. 721-47; Clive Foss, "The Fall of Sardis in 616 and the Value of Evidence", *Jahrbuch für österreichischen Byzantinistik*, xxiv (1975), pp. 11-22; Clive Foss, "Archaeology and the 'Twenty Cities' of Byzantine Asia", *Amer. Jl. Archaeology*, lxxxi (1977), pp. 469-86.

<sup>6</sup> Since this paper was written, G. Dagron's important article, "Le christianisme dans la ville byzantine", *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, xxxi (1977), pp. 3-25, has reinforced this impression.

his ceremonial, with its fixed calendar of progresses through the city, now probably for the first time being regularized, the emperor took possession of his city, and the urban religious symbols which he now promoted reinforced his position at its head. It is the most natural thing of all that precisely during these years that most agonistic feature of Justinianic society — the circus factions — was drawn securely into imperial ceremonial, even imperial ceremonial at its most fully religious.

The seventh-century invasions did not, it is clear, suddenly cut off a society unchanged since the late Roman period.<sup>7</sup> Profound changes were taking place already in the provinces, where the internal organization of towns was being transformed, and where it was becoming increasingly more difficult for the government to maintain the late Roman administrative and military apparatus.<sup>8</sup> As for Constantinople, a moment in the city's history epitomizes the changed situation, while demonstrating the sense of integration now achieved. It has a flavour which one could not imagine transposed to the reign of Justinian. On 7 August 626 the people of Constantinople finally fought off the invading Avars after a truly desperate siege. In the waters of the Golden Horn, in front of her own great church at Blachernae, the Virgin herself appeared to the people, brandishing her sword, encouraging the combatants and inspiring them to redden the waters of the imperial city with the blood of Avars and Slavs.<sup>9</sup> She fought as a warrior-maiden, a reminder of Athena Promachos, whose statue stood in the city,<sup>10</sup> and laid low the enemy, women among them.<sup>11</sup> The khagan of the Avars saw with his own eyes a veiled lady

<sup>7</sup> As implied by Foss, "The Persians in Asia Minor and the End of Antiquity".

<sup>8</sup> Emperors being out of fashion, the capital has tended to be overlooked in recent discussion, though earlier studies gave it more attention: see A. Grabar, *L'empereur dans l'art byzantin* (Paris, 1936), pp. 163 ff.; Kitzinger, "The Cult of Images in the Period before Iconoclasm", pp. 127 ff.

<sup>9</sup> The best discussion of the difficult sources for this siege is F. Barišić, "Le siège de Constantinople par les Avars et les Slaves en 626", *Byzantion*, xxiv (1954), pp. 371-95; see also A. Frolov, "La dédicace de Constantinople dans la tradition byzantine", *Revue de l'histoire des religions*, cxxvii (1944), pp. 61-127.

<sup>10</sup> R. Jenkins, "The Bronze Athena at Byzantium", *Jl. Hellenic Studies*, lxvii (1947), pp. 31-3.

<sup>11</sup> See *Nova Patrum Bibliotheca*, ed. A. Mai, 7 vols. (Rome, 1844-54), vi pt. 2, p. 433. The Greek text here edited by Angelo Mai (hereafter Anon. Mai) is a homily on the siege, preserved without the author's name, but very probably written by one Theodore, a *syncellus* of St. Sophia, and delivered on 7 August 627; it was also edited by L. Sternbach, *Analecta Avarica* (Cracow, 1900), pp. 2-24, now reprinted with French translation and commentary by F. Mañé, *Traduction et commentaire de l'homélie écrite probablement par Théodore le syncelle sur le siège de Constantinople en 626* (Acta Universitatis de Attila József nominata, Acta in Hungaria archaeologica, xix; Opuscula byzantina, iii; Szeged, 1975); the latter has not yet been accessible to me and I cite the text by reference to the most readily available edition, namely that of Mai. For the date and authorship, see Barišić, *op. cit.*, pp. 373-4.



walking the ramparts;<sup>12</sup> and the Virgin's icons, deployed in procession by the patriarch Sergius, acting for the absent Emperor Heraclius, stimulated the faith and gratitude of the entire population. We shall return to this siege. For now, it is enough to say that it marked one of the most complete moments of unity ever realized in Constantinople. Even though Heraclius was away from his city campaigning in Persia, he was constantly present in the minds of his people, and represented to them by the patriarch. Thus the siege and its triumphant conclusion became a demonstration of the intimate connection of the emperor, patriarch and people, all under the protection of the warrior-Virgin. In the words of the new preface to the Akathistos hymn, the population gave thanks to her:

I, your city, commemorate the victory festival as a thank-offering to you, Mother of God, our victorious general, for my cleansing from danger. And you, who have might against which no fight avails, release me from every kind of danger, that I may cry to thee "Hail, unmarried bride".<sup>13</sup>

It was a moment of city unity, and the Virgin at this moment fulfilled the function of a city deity. But the city was an imperial city, and the myth-making which at once surrounded this siege also arose from the sense of divine protection for the whole empire. It was this very closeness of identification of the emperors with their imperial city and its divine protectors which more than anything else enabled them to survive in the hard times to come. As the provinces one by one fell away, they were able to retrench and draw strength from their secure position in the capital. To understand how this strength was achieved we must consider in turn a series of different developments in the late sixth century.

## I

## CEREMONIAL

Although emperors had long developed their own imperial ceremonial and participated in liturgical ceremonies,<sup>14</sup> we can now see a

<sup>12</sup> *Chronicon Paschale*, ed. L. Dindorf, 2 vols. (Corpus scriptorum historiae Byzantinae [hereafter C.S.H.B.], Bonn, 1832), i, p. 725, line 9; Joannes Scylitzes, in Georgius Cedrenus, *Compendium historiarum*, ed. I. Bekker, 2 vols. (C.S.H.B., Bonn, 1838-9), i, p. 728, lines 23 ff. For further apparitions of the Virgin in the sixth century as a veiled lady, see H. Chadwick, "John Moschos and his Friend Sophronius the Sophist", *Jl. Theol. Studies*, new ser., xxv (1974), pp. 65-6.

<sup>13</sup> Akathistos hymn, proem II; see E. Wellesz, "The Akathistos", *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, ix-x (1955-6), pp. 143 ff.; C. A. Trypanis, *Fourteen Early Byzantine Cantica* (Wiener byzantinische Studien, v, Vienna, 1968), pp. 17 ff.; J. Grosdidier de Matons, *Romanos le Mélode et les origines de la poésie religieuse à Byzance* (Paris, 1977), p. 34. Peter Brown has recently emphasized the importance of such consensus in a late antique city: Peter Brown, *Relics and Social Status in the Age of Gregory of Tours* (The Stenton Lecture, 1976, Univ. of Reading, 1977), pp. 19 ff.

<sup>14</sup> For a dynamic treatment of a particular ceremony, see S. MacCormack, "Change and Continuity in Late Antiquity: The Ceremony of Adventus", *Historia*, (cont. on p. 8)

significant growth in the scale and purposiveness of such activities. Most of the protocols laid down in the tenth-century *Book of Ceremonies* of the Emperor Constantine Porphyrogenitus cannot be assigned a date of origin, since they are recorded outside a historical context, as timeless prescriptions for future occasions.<sup>15</sup> Nevertheless certain definite signs do point to the late sixth century as a time when the imperial ceremonial was taking shape as a regular pattern of occasions and movements spread over the year and ranging over the urban space of Constantinople; now, too, it became increasingly merged with the religious life of the city, so that even if outwardly an individual ceremonial action seemed to have no religious connotations, it would in fact be invested with a totally religious interpretation.

Evidence for imperial ceremony as such in Justinian's reign is slight. Yet there are pointers all the same. We would expect *a priori* that a brilliant, long and self-conscious reign such as this would tend towards an increase in imperial display and probably ceremony too. Indeed one of the sources used by Constantine Porphyrogenitus was a treatise on ceremony by one of Justinian's top ministers — Peter the Patrician, who as Master of Offices had to direct and take part in these ceremonies himself.<sup>16</sup> Manuals on kingship from the period also suggest an interest in the theory and style of monarchy.<sup>17</sup> Justinian

(note 14 cont.)

xxi (1972), pp. 721-52, and further in her *Art and Ceremony in Late Antiquity* (forthcoming). The crystallization of the fixed ceremonial as known in the tenth century was very slow, but the emperors were participating in regular imperial and liturgical processions by the fifth century: see Marcellinus Comes (*Monumenta Germaniae Historica* [hereafter M.G.H.], *Chronica Minora*, ii, Auctores antiquissimi, xi, Berlin, 1894), *sub annis* 431, 472 and 512; see also R. Janin, "Les processions religieuses de Byzance", *Revue des études byzantines*, xxiv (1966), pp. 69-88. The concept of a "Catholic grid" structuring the life of Gallic towns in the late sixth century (Brown, *Relics and Social Status in the Age of Gregory of Tours*, p. 9) may be helpful also for Constantinople, where the grid was by now both imperial and ecclesiastical.

<sup>15</sup> Constantine Porphyrogenitus, *De ceremoniis aulae Byzantinae*, ed. J. J. Reiske, 2 vols. (C.S.H.B., Bonn, 1829-30). Exceptions to this generalization are the descriptions of the entries of Justinian in 559 (*ibid.*, i, p. 497), Basil I in 879 (*ibid.*, i, pp. 398-9) and Theophilus in 831 (*ibid.*, i, pp. 503-4; see also pp. 627 ff.). The most useful (though too static) discussion of Byzantine ceremonial is still O. Treitinger, *Die oströmische Kaiser- und Reichsidee vom oströmischen Staats- und Reichsgedanken*, 2nd edn. (Darmstadt, 1956).

<sup>16</sup> See J. B. Bury, "The Ceremonial Book of Constantine Porphyrogenitus", *Eng. Hist. Rev.*, xxii (1907), pp. 209-27, 417-39; E. Stein, *Histoire du Bas-Empire*, 2 vols. (Paris, 1949-59), ii, pp. 723-9; A. Pertusi, "I principi fondamentali della concezione di potere a Bisanzio. Per un commento al dialogo 'Sulla scienza politica' attribuito a Pietro Patrizio (secolo VI)", *Bullettino del Istituto Storico Italiano per il Medio Evo*, lxxx (1968), pp. 1 ff. Peter's use of the phrase "as is customary" (*Consuetudine*) in *De ceremoniis aulae Byzantinae*, i, p. 397, and see pp. 418, 420, 630) shows that a formalized procedure was already in existence.

<sup>17</sup> See P. Henry, "A Mirror for Justinian: The Ekthesis of Agapetus Diaconus", *Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies*, viii (1967), pp. 281-308. There is also an anonymous *Peri politikēs epistēmēs*, of which a new fragment has recently been



had no great public inauguration ceremony to evoke panegyric or encourage the formation of a more elaborate ritual.<sup>18</sup> But when much of the centre of Constantinople was burned down in the Nika riot of 532 he was effectively enabled to lay out and build afresh the whole area linking the palace and St. Sophia, and opening out into the main thoroughfare leading to the Forum of Constantine. Thus he remade the ceremonial core of the city almost from scratch; from then on, this complex of imperial and religious building would be the setting for the beginning and ending of all great city occasions. It was only the finishing touch — though a vitally important one — when Justinian's successor enhanced the possibility of uniting imperial and religious ceremonial by supporting the building of a new patriarchate in the same central area.<sup>19</sup>

When Vandal Africa fell so spectacularly (and unexpectedly) to Belisarius, Justinian staged a celebration in the form of an archaizing revival of the old Roman triumph.<sup>20</sup> Not-so-subtle differences emphasized the fact that six hundred years had passed since the last triumph was held,<sup>21</sup> yet even so, the general effect would be to stress the sense of the Roman past. But by 559, when another victory won by Belisarius was to be commemorated, Justinian had given up the

[NOTE 17 CONT.]  
discovered: C. Behr, "A New Fragment of Cicero's *De Republica*", *Amer. J. Philology*, xciv (1974), pp. 141-9. Another, possibly different, text is mentioned by Photius: see *ibid.*, p. 144; F. Dvornik, *Early Christian and Byzantine Political Philosophy: Origins and Background*, 2 vols. (Dumbarton Oaks Studies, ix, Washington, 1966), ii, pp. 706-7. The anonymous sixth-century *Peri strategikes* (in *Griechische Kriegsschriftsteller*, ed. H. Köchly and W. Rustow, 2 vols., Leipzig, 1853-5, ii pt. 2, p. 54) cites as one of the components of Byzantine society the "theatrical" element, employed at the staging of imperial occasions: see Alan Cameron, *Circus Factions* (Oxford, 1976), pp. 80-1. Procopius's famous critique of the court etiquette imposed by the Empress Theodora is yet another indication of this growing imperial self-consciousness: Procopius Caesariensis, *Opera omnia*, ed. J. Haury, rev. G. Wirth, 4 vols. (Leipzig, 1962-4), iii, *Secret History*, xxxi, 21 ff.

<sup>18</sup> Justinian was elevated during the lifetime of Justin I and would have been crowned by him inside the palace, whereas inaugurations of "new" emperors took place in public in the Hippodrome: see Janet Nelson's perceptive analysis of early Byzantine inauguration ceremonies, "Symbols in Context", *Studies in Church History*, xiii (1976), pp. 98-9.

<sup>19</sup> John of Ephesus, *Historia ecclesiastica*, pt. iii, ed. E. W. Brooks (Corpus scriptorum christianorum orientalium, Scriptorum Syri, ser. iii, pt. 3, Louvain, 1936), ii, 34 (built by the patriarch John Scholasticus, surely with imperial support). See Robin Cormack and Ernest J. W. Hawkins, "The Mosaics of St. Sophia at Istanbul: The Rooms above the Southwest Vestibule and Ramp", *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, xxxi (1977), pp. 200 ff., bringing out the central importance of this building complex.

<sup>20</sup> Procopius, *Wars*, iv, 9. Procopius himself comments on the deliberateness and artificiality of the Roman revival. See J. Deér, "Der Ursprung der Kaiserkrone", *Schweizer Beiträge zur allgemeinen Geschichte*, viii (1950), pp. 51 ff.

<sup>21</sup> The culmination of this triumph was not the arrival of the triumphing general on the Capitol but his prostration before Justinian in the Hippodrome: Procopius, *Wars*, iv, 9; in a sense the triumph was the emperor's, and Justinian, therefore, wore the jewelled triumphal cloak: John Lydus, *De magistratibus*, ed. O. Wuensch (Leipzig, 1903), iii, 3.

Roman pomp for a more typically late antique *adventus* — a formal entry into the city in which he himself rode on horseback and stopped at a church to give thanks to God and pray for the soul of the now-dead Empress Theodora.<sup>22</sup> The most military of imperial ceremonies now incorporates religious ritual. Small hints show that a regular pattern of imperial behaviour now existed, interwoven with the religious calendar. It was a mark of deep respect on Justinian's part when he left off his crown on Christmas Day after a serious earthquake, and went further by cancelling a now customary imperial feast in the Chamber of the Nineteen Beds in the palace.<sup>23</sup> The poem which Paul the Silentiary (one of the educated, if not perhaps quite the governing, élite)<sup>24</sup> composed in 563 to celebrate the rededication of St. Sophia, heavily damaged by earthquake in 557, owes little to classical tradition, and sees the emperor's position in terms of his relationship with the patriarch.<sup>25</sup> Justinian himself was willing on some formal occasions to walk on foot while the patriarch rode in the imperial carriage.<sup>26</sup> Similarly telling is his interest in the increasingly elaborate liturgy;<sup>27</sup> he often endowed his new churches with an income substantial enough to provide the personnel, sometimes running into hundreds, to conduct complex services.<sup>28</sup> The liturgical hymn known as the *kontakion*, best known to us in association with the name of Romanos, now attained its peak; not only was its performance during the liturgy itself a complex public ritual, which belongs with the contemporary elaboration of church services, but it was even used at times

<sup>22</sup> Constantine Porphyrogenitus, *De cerimoniis aulae Byzantinae*, i, pp. 497-8, on which see Stein, *Histoire du Bas-Empire*, ii, pp. 818-19. The so-called *mnema* (memorial) at which Justinian lit candles is surely a tomb, and thus the tomb of Theodora, who died in 548 (Stein, *op. cit.*, ii, p. 589), since it is called "the memorial of our sovereign lady".

<sup>23</sup> Theophanes, *Chronographia*, ed. C. de Boor, 2 vols. (Leipzig, 1883-5), i, p. 232.

<sup>24</sup> For these palace officials and "professional" men (lawyers, grammarians and the like), see G. Mathew, *Byzantine Aesthetics* (London, 1963), pp. 67 ff.; Peter Brown, *The World of Late Antiquity* (London, 1971), pp. 180 ff.

<sup>25</sup> See esp. Paulus Silentiarius, *Descriptio S. Sophiae*, ed. P. Friedländer (Leipzig and Berlin, 1912), lines 1-134, 921-1029. There had been a serious plot against the emperor in 562 (Theophanes, *Chronographia*, i, p. 237), and this official poem, recited on a solemn public occasion, was clearly meant to reinforce imperial prestige. The emperor and the patriarch led the rededication ceremony together: *ibid.*, i, p. 238.

<sup>26</sup> Theophanes, *Chronographia*, i, p. 228.

<sup>27</sup> See Brown, "A Dark-Age Crisis", p. 22; E. Wellesz, *A History of Byzantine Music and Hymnography*, 2nd edn. (Oxford, 1961), p. 138. T. F. Mathews, *The Early Churches of Constantinople: Architecture and Liturgy* (University Park, Pa., 1971), explores the connection between church-building and liturgical development.

<sup>28</sup> For example, Procopius, *Buildings*, v, 6.1 (the Nea church in Jerusalem), and ii, 10.24 (the church of the Virgin at Antioch). See too Justinian, *Novel iii* (535), ed. B. Schoell and G. Kroll, in *Corpus iuris civilis*, 6th edn., 3 vols. (Berlin, 1954), iii, *Novellae*; P. J. Pargoire, *L'église byzantine de 527 à 847* (Paris, 1905), pp. 115 ff.



as a vehicle for imperial ideology,<sup>29</sup> which thus gained the setting of a church. It was hardly to be wondered at if imperial ceremony itself followed the example of the increasingly complex liturgy; the mechanisms of the church were, after all, stronger and more impressive instruments of public communication than classical rhetoric.

The direct evidence for Justinian is admittedly slight. But perhaps the clearest proof that a change took place in his reign is the ceremonial surrounding the inauguration of his successor in 565, as described in the panegyric by the contemporary poet Corippus.<sup>30</sup> The poem itself suggests a transition; notwithstanding obvious debts to earlier Latin panegyric, Corippus's novel focus on the here-and-now of the actual ceremonies, for instance the funeral of Justinian, brings us forcibly into the atmosphere of the deposition of a relic or of the contemporary mourning scenes in the Vienna Genesis.<sup>31</sup> The dead Justinian, covered, it is true, with a funeral pall embroidered with the triumphal scenes of his prime, has nevertheless attained the status of a holy person.<sup>32</sup>

This panegyric is in fact a prime text. It demonstrates unmistakably the transition I am trying to suggest, manifested in the most sensitive ritual of Byzantine imperial life, the accession of a new emperor. Indeed, it is, perhaps for good reason, the only such detailed description of a complete accession ritual in the sixth century.<sup>33</sup> Justin II was

<sup>29</sup> See E. Catafygiotu-Topping, "Romanos, On the Entry into Jerusalem: A Basilikos Logos", *Byzantion*, xlvii (1977), pp. 65-91, pointing out the connection between the themes of the liturgical *kontakion* and those of imperial panegyric — here that of royal *adventus* and acclamation; see also E. Catafygiotu-Topping, "On Earthquakes and Fires", *Byzantinische Zeitschrift*, lxxi (1978), pp. 22-35. For Romanos and the *kontakion*, the work of J. Grosdidier de Matons is basic: Grosdidier de Matons, *Romanos le Mélode*, and see also K. Mitsakis, *Byzantine hymnografia*, i (Thessaloniki, 1971), pp. 171-353.

<sup>30</sup> Flavius Cresconius Corippus, *In laudem Iustini minoris*, ed. Averil Cameron (London, 1976).

<sup>31</sup> For the relation of deposition ritual and *adventus*, see MacCormack, "Change and Continuity in Late Antiquity", pp. 747 ff. For tears and mourning, see Corippus, *In laudem Iustini minoris*, iii. 41, and commentary, pp. 180-1; E. Kitzinger, "The Hellenistic Heritage of Byzantine Art", *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, xvii (1963), p. 111; H. Maguire, "The Depiction of Sorrow in Middle Byzantine Art", *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, xxxi (1977), pp. 125-74.

<sup>32</sup> On the funeral pall, see Corippus, *In laudem Iustini minoris*, i. 276 ff. As inauguration procedure now develops into fixed ritual, so too imperial and patriarchal funerals acquire a set form. See, for example, the funerals of Eudocia, first wife of Heraclius (Nicephorus, *Breviarium*, ed. C. de Boor, Leipzig, 1880, p. 7), and of the patriarchs Eutychius in 582 (Eustratius, *Vita Eutychii*, *Patrologiae cursus completus*, ed. J.-P. Migne, Series graeca [hereafter P.G.], lxxxvi pt. 2, Rome, 1865, col. 2384) and Sergius in 638 (Constantine Porphyrogenitus, *De cerimoniis aulae Byzantinae*, i, p. 630).

<sup>33</sup> See Nelson, "Symbols in Context", pp. 98 ff. In this particular case there were political reasons which made it seem desirable to reinforce Justin's position with as complete a crowning ceremony as possible (see Corippus, *In laudem Iustini minoris*, pp. 156-7); for similar reasons it was minutely described by the panegyrist, who thus provided us with a unique record.

the last emperor in our period to be both raised on a shield and crowned by the patriarch with the diadem in one and the same ceremony. After him, shield-raising, with other "Roman" survivals, seems effectively to have lapsed.<sup>34</sup> With Justin II the ritual is poised on the brink of its fully Byzantine form, for he is crowned in the palace, not in a church, whereas after him the ceremony was soon transferred to St. Sophia, its location throughout the rest of Byzantine history. Thus we are allowed for once to see a Byzantine ceremony exactly at a point of change. We must not fail to recognize how far things had already gone.

Why, we may ask, does Corippus write precisely this kind of panegyric, one which departs from the conventional rhetoric of a Claudian or a Sidonius and devotes itself to the minute and realistic description of actual ceremonies? It is not enough to say that he is an inferior poet.<sup>35</sup> His careful account marks a new departure; he not only describes, but also explains the meaning of every piece of ceremonial, and usually the meanings he gives are Christian ones, even for the archaic survivals. Nor is it enough to explain Corippus's detailed approach to ceremony as such; we should ask *why* he devotes so much attention to these specific rituals. Why is it that precisely during the sixth century Byzantine inauguration ritual develops from an unpredictable elective technique to a highly sophisticated and fully religious ritual performed by the patriarch and located in the major imperial church?<sup>36</sup> We shall see later that the late sixth-century emperors used the popularity of the cult of icons and the growth of emphasis on the Virgin to help them to assert their own position. A tightened and intensified inauguration ritual emphasizing the emperor's divine election would work for them in the same direction. The secular elements still present till now will soon drop away, to leave room for an identification of the imperial coronation as a fully religious rite.

The inauguration of Justin II marks the exact turning-point. The secular elements are still there, but each is given a religious interpretation in the panegyric. Raised on the military shield, the emperor

<sup>34</sup> See Corippus, *In laudem Iustini minoris*, pp. 160-1, note on ii. 136; Nelson, *op. cit.*, pp. 100 ff.; C. Walter, "Raising on a Shield in Byzantine Iconography", *Revue des études byzantines*, xxxiii (1975), pp. 133 ff.; D. M. Nicol, "Kaiserhebung: The Unction of Emperors in Late Byzantine Coronation Ritual", *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies*, ii (1976), pp. 37 ff.

<sup>35</sup> C. Witke, *Numen Litterarum* (Leiden and Cologne, 1971), is unusual in recognizing the originality of Corippus's approach.

<sup>36</sup> Nelson, *op. cit.*, gives the most analytic and least dogmatic account; the standard full treatment (though much too schematized) is E. Thraupoulou, *Eklektika anagoreusis kai stepsis tou byzantinou autokratōros* (Athens, 1956). The sixth-century ceremony presents, and Corippus duly emphasizes, all four elements (recognition, investiture, installation and acclamation) isolated by M. Fortes, "Of Installation Ceremonies", *Proc. Roy. Anthropological Inst.* (1967), p. 11.



nevertheless is said to "rise" like Christ, and the same analogy is implied even when he is raised as consul in the curule chair.<sup>37</sup> The whole inauguration symbolizes for the poet the emperor's role as the *imago Christi*;<sup>38</sup> it is a true *rite de passage*, after which the emperor emerges in his new role as God's representative, a role in which he will in later times on occasion ceremonially enact the part of Christ. Justin's coronation speech grotesquely but no doubt effectively reinforces the sense of a descending order of authority; God has put the emperor on his throne as the head of the state, the senators are its chest, the people its arms and legs.<sup>39</sup> The ideas have seldom before found such a forceful expression, or conveyed such a strong impression of total social and religious unity. Over and over again throughout the panegyric there is the same insistence, in different ways, on the line of authority and protection, with the emperor as the mediator of both between God and his people. Unity and hierarchy are the twin messages of the poem, and the emperor is the focus of both.

Certainly we must admit a high degree of manipulation in the accession of Justin, and a consequent advantage to the regime in stressing ideas such as these. Corippus was an official poet, and even the very ceremony he describes was provably stage-managed to forestall opposition.<sup>40</sup> A major effort had been made; when the new emperor appeared in the Hippodrome he was acclaimed not by the army, as had been customary earlier in the century, but by the very Blues and Greens against whom he had only recently himself led imperial troops.<sup>41</sup> This is very surprising, as formerly they had been mainly conspicuous as rioters and urban gangsters.<sup>42</sup> Yet in the tenth-century *Book of Ceremonies* they are the recognized leaders of imperial

<sup>37</sup> Corippus, *In laudem Iustini minoris*, ii. 148 ff.; iv. 99 ff., 250 ff.; see E. Kantorowicz, "Oriens Augusti: lever du roi", *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, xvii (1963), pp. 152-3.

<sup>38</sup> Corippus, *In laudem Iustini minoris*, ii. 420 ff. The imperial imitation of Christ is also one of the main themes of Agapetus's *Ekthesis*; see Henry, "A Mirror for Justinian".

<sup>39</sup> Corippus, *In laudem Iustini minoris*, ii. 178-274. See E. Kantorowicz, *The King's Two Bodies* (Princeton, 1957), pp. 185 ff.; for the Christian overtones, see I Corinthians xii. 12 ff. As the tightened inauguration ritual draws stricter boundaries, so the head and body symbolism, appearing in the same context, stands for a drawing together of all sections of society.

<sup>40</sup> See note 33 above. The panegyric was commissioned by the quaestor Anastasius (for other important patrons, see Corippus, *In laudem Iustini minoris*, i. 18 ff., and iv. 368 ff.), one of Justin II's two closest advisers; the other was the patriarch John Scholasticus, the man who crowned him.

<sup>41</sup> Corippus, *In laudem Iustini minoris*, ii. 310 ff.; for Justin's own role in dealing with recent faction rioting, see John Malalas, *Chronographia*, ed. L. Dindorf (C.S.H.B., Bonn, 1831), p. 491.

<sup>42</sup> These activities of the Blues and Greens and their "transformation" are fully discussed in Cameron, *Circus Factions*. Patlagean, *Pauvreté économique et pauvreté sociale*, pp. 203 ff., sets the urban violence of the factions persuasively in the social context of the sixth-century city.

ceremonial. Now Justin II's inauguration allows us to see that this transformation had begun as early as 565. It will not have been achieved without considerable imperial effort and doubtless expenditure. Both of these were necessary also for Justin's much advertised revival of the consulship, which followed very shortly on his coronation. There were political advantages for Justin in assuming the consulship, defunct for a generation, since it enabled him to win the favour of the urban population by literally scattering gold to them as his processions passed, and that of the upper classes by distributing gifts of silver and gold. He might advertise it, too, by promising the return of an age of justice.<sup>43</sup> But it had as much to offer on the symbolic level, with its inauguration ceremony, its association with the opening of a new year (consuls entered office on 1st January) and its regular processions through the city.<sup>44</sup> Almost as much as an imperial inauguration, the taking of the consulship was both a *rite de passage* and a symbol of hierarchy; henceforth, with the consulship limited to reigning emperors, the associations would be combined in one.

So by 565 there was a recognition of the need for change. All the same this was an early stage in the process. Corippus may have abandoned the rhetoric of late Latin poetry (of which his other major poem shows him to have been capable)<sup>45</sup> for the plainer description of Byzantine protocol, but he is not yet willing to come right out into the open with Christian symbolism, preferring to work indirectly through allusions and images. Corippus will not yet present Justin II as David, or place him in the long span of Christian history, as we shall find Heraclius soon being treated by contemporary writers. A hankering after the classical remains.

When we come to consider how far things had developed by the end of the century, it will be clear that much of the evidence for the further development of imperial ceremonial in this period in fact centres round the Blues and Greens of whom we have already spoken. The study of Corippus's panegyric and recent work on the factions have together shown that the "ceremonial role" of the factions had come

<sup>43</sup> Corippus, *In laudem Iustini minoris*, iii. 333-56; see *Anthologia Planudea*, lxxii (an inscription for a statue of Justin II in consular dress), on which see Averil and Alan Cameron, "Anth. Plan. 72: A Propaganda Poem from the Reign of Justin II", *Bull. Inst. Classical Studies*, xiii (1966), pp. 101 ff.

<sup>44</sup> The ivory diptychs commemorating a consul's year of office are the best guide to sixth-century expectations; see R. Delbrueck, *Die Consulardiptychen und verwandte Denkmäler*, 2 vols. (Berlin, 1929). Apart from the consul's obligation to provide largesse, and his ceremonial elevation, his chief role was that of presiding officer at the games, thus appearing at the head of the city's major secular public occasion (and that at which Blue/Green conflicts most often broke out, where there was consequently most urgent need of imperial control).

<sup>45</sup> The *Iohannis*, a more conventional epic treatment of the African campaigns of Justinian's general John Troglita: Flavius Cresconius Corippus, *Iohannidos, libri VIII*, ed. J. Diggle and F. R. D. Goodyear (Cambridge, 1970).

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into being well before Heraclius.<sup>46</sup> There are no Blues or Greens at the entry of Justinian in 559, nor in the parts of the *Book of Ceremonies* drawn from Justinian's minister, Peter the Patrician. But they are there at Justin II's inauguration, at the marriage of Maurice in 582 and the crowning of Leontia in 602. When Heraclius went to meet the khagan of the Avars at Heraclea in 619 he took Blues and Greens with him, to impress the khagan with imperial ceremony.<sup>47</sup> By 602 there were certainly already Blue and Green "stations" along imperial processional routes, made possible by a growing hierarchy of faction officials now attested for the first time, and the dispute which broke out on the occasion of the crowning of Leontia in that year was precisely about the respective ceremonial rights of the Blues and Greens.<sup>48</sup>

It would be premature to assume that the factions were thus easily neutralized, for they remained a potentially powerful factor in politics, and made their influence felt on a number of occasions during the reign of Phocas (602-10) for instance.<sup>49</sup> In the months leading up to the tyrant's overthrow Blues and Greens took the lead on both sides in what was virtually civil war in many of the leading cities of the empire.<sup>50</sup> As long as they remained as organized, and indeed often armed, groups in urban situations, both in Constantinople and elsewhere, they would inevitably be the first to be involved in civil disturbance, and thus it was that the events leading up to the fall of Phocas, which in no sense amounted to a social revolution, nevertheless gave the Blues and Greens an opening for political action which they had not had for decades.<sup>51</sup> But none of this contradicts the fact that references to Blues and Greens in late sixth-century sources prove clearly both the growth of imperial ceremony and the organized participation in it of the factions.

Scholars have tended to see this participation in ceremonial (which

<sup>46</sup> See esp. Cameron, *Circus Factions*, pp. 249 ff.

<sup>47</sup> All this evidence is discussed in *ibid.* For the ceremonial aspect of the attendance of the Blues and Greens on Heraclius, see also Nelson, "Symbols in Context", pp. 101-2; but they are not there as a "city militia", as has been commonly thought: see Cameron, *Circus Factions*, p. 257. Patlagean, *op. cit.*, p. 205, gives a helpful summary of past attempts to explain the Blues and Greens by reference to consistent social or religious affiliations, now mostly exploded by Cameron, *Circus Factions*, pt. 1.

<sup>48</sup> Theophylact Simocatta, *Historiae*, ed. C. de Boor (Leipzig, 1887), viii. 10. 10 ff.

<sup>49</sup> Theophanes, *Chronographia*, i, pp. 292, 294, 296. Phocas ordered that the troublesome Greens should no longer *politeuesthai*; for the translation and interpretation of this word, see Cameron, *Circus Factions*, pp. 288-9.

<sup>50</sup> Cameron, *Circus Factions*, p. 282. It seems perverse to deny that they were deeply involved in politics at this time.

<sup>51</sup> Apart from an incident at the proclamation of Tiberius II — see Gregory of Tours, *Historia Francorum*, v. 30 (M.G.H., *Scriptores rerum Merovingiarum*, 4 vols., 1 pt. 1, 2nd edn., ed. B. Krusch and W. Levison, Hanover, 1951) — they seem to have been quiet since the accession of Justin II.

they mostly attribute to the reign of Heraclius)<sup>52</sup> as a "drawing of the teeth" of the factions by assigning them a "merely ceremonial" role. On the contrary we must view this utilization of the Blues and Greens in imperial ceremony as a very positive effort towards social integration. The "young men" frequently mentioned in contemporary accounts of faction activity were clearly a marginal group, and their lack of position or purpose in society as a whole made their existence in an organized form a constant and real danger.<sup>53</sup> It was not, then, that induced to participate in imperial occasions in an officially recognized capacity this would be both a public affirmation of unity in the state and a way of bringing them into the social order.

## II

### THE EMPEROR AND HIS SETTING

We are already familiar with the idea of the reign of Justin II as marking something of a turning-point in imperial ideology.<sup>54</sup> But what can we make of such modern descriptions as "liturgification" and "new piety"? For the Byzantine emperor had always been seen in a religious context. "God gave you to us. God will preserve you. You are ever-victorious, for you honour Christ" ran acclamations of army and people in the fifth century.<sup>55</sup> But now the emperor is seen more consistently as the slave of God, less often as the heir of Augustus.

<sup>52</sup> See Cameron, *Circus Factions*, pp. 297-8.

<sup>53</sup> On the "young men", see *ibid.*, pp. 75 ff.; Patlagean, *Pauvreté économique et pauvreté sociale*, p. 228. The Blues and Greens were surely more than mere sporting associations, as they are firmly presented by Cameron; the factional violence of the Justinianic era indicates both a general lack of social control and their own lack of position: see Patlagean, *op. cit.*, pp. 223 ff. But as yet we know too little about who the Blues and Greens actually were. For suggestive comparisons, see G. Duby, "Les 'jeunes' dans la société aristocratique", *Annales E.S.C.*, xix (1964), pp. 835-46; Natalie Z. Davis, "Some Tasks and Themes in the Study of Popular Religion", in C. Trinkaus and H. Oberman (eds.), *The Pursuit of Holiness in Late Medieval and Renaissance Religion* (Leiden, 1974), p. 327.

<sup>54</sup> Thus Treitinger, *Die oströmische Kaiser- und Reichsidee*, pp. 27-8; Averil Cameron, "The Early Religious Policies of Justin II", *Studies in Church History*, xiii (1976), pp. 65-6; Kitzinger, "The Cult of Images in the Period before Iconoclasm", pp. 126 ff.; I. Lavin, "The House of the Lord", *Art Bull.*, xlv (1962), p. 23; J. D. Breckenridge, *The Numismatic Iconography of Justinian II* (New York, 1959), pp. 54-5; Grabar, *L'empereur dans l'art byzantin*, pp. 163 ff. In part this impression depends on stylistic judgements about imperial and religious art in this period, which I have largely tried to avoid in this paper. But I have suggested elsewhere, first, that by the reign of Justin II at least, it is a mistake to see too much separation between the terms "imperial" and "religious": see Averil Cameron, "Corippus's Poem on Justin II: A Terminus of Antique Art?", *Annali della Scuola Normale di Pisa*, 3rd ser., v (1975), pp. 15 ff.; and secondly, that the literary sources deserve more attention than they usually receive in comparison with the few extant works, even when the art works they mention have not survived: Averil Cameron, "The Artistic Patronage of Justin II" (forthcoming in *Byzantium*).

<sup>55</sup> Constantine Porphyrogenitus, *De ceremoniis aulae Byzantinae*, i, p. 411.



When the demented Justin II hands over power to Tiberius, his words, faithfully reproduced by a contemporary struck by the pathos of the scene, breathe a new tone: "see the wretched Justin stripped and fallen from his kingdom".<sup>56</sup> The reign of Heraclius certainly shows the change. The emperor who claimed his throne in a heroic crusade assisted by the Virgin went on to fight a holy war and restore the True Cross to Jerusalem. In his reign occurred the greatest symbolic event experienced by the capital during this period — the Avar siege of 626, with its proof of the city's protection by the Virgin — and when Heraclius made his triumphal return from Persia in 628 he was greeted by people and patriarch not with a Roman triumph but with hymns of praise to God.<sup>57</sup> In 629 he set the seal on this change of direction by giving up the traditional imperial titulature which went back to the days of Augustus and officially adopting instead the Greek term *basileus* (emperor) — but not *basileus* alone: henceforth the emperor was to be known as the "believing" emperor (*pistos en Christo basileus*).<sup>58</sup> Texts of the same period refer often to the "Christ-loving" emperor;<sup>59</sup> and while earlier emperors also had been the pious servants of God, as Justinian was shown at Ravenna,<sup>60</sup> it was only now that they were willing to give up six hundred years of imperial tradition. Certainly the climate was changing with Justin II, who inserted the title of Christ as King of Kings into the liturgy<sup>61</sup> and made explicit in his own building programme the twin conceptions of the emperor as the image of Christ and Christ as the *rex regnantium*. Corippus represents Justin's accession as having been foreshadowed in a dream investiture by the Virgin, and Justin's words echoed the same theme:

<sup>56</sup> John of Ephesus, *Historia ecclesiastica*, iii. 5. Justin believed that the words of abdication were being dictated to him by an angel; see Averil Cameron, "An Emperor's Abdication", *Byzantinistica*, xxxvii (1976), pp. 161-7.

<sup>57</sup> Theophanes, *Chronographia*, i, p. 328. Theophanes elevates the emperor's return to the sphere of sacred history by recalling the six days of the Creation.

<sup>58</sup> I. Shahid, "The Iranian Factor in Byzantium during the Reign of Heraclius", *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, xxvi (1972), pp. 295, 317-20, stressing the religious implications as against earlier scholars who had seen the change as relating to the defeat of Persia (Bréhier, Bury) or as a final recognition of Greek as the language of the state (Ostrogorsky). See now too G. Rosch, *Onoma basileas: Studien zum offiziellen Gebrauch der Kaisertitel in spätantike und frühbyzantinischer Zeit* (Byzantina Vindobonensia, x, Vienna, 1978), p. 70.

<sup>59</sup> For example, see the anonymous homily on the deposition of the Virgin's robe at Blachernae (early seventh century) edited with Russian translation by Ch. Loparev, "Staroe svidetel'stvo o Polozhenii rizy Bogoroditsy vo Vlachernakh v novom istolkovanii primenitel'no k nashestvii Russkikh na Vizantii v 860 godu", *Vizantiiskii Vremennik*, ii (1895), pp. 581-628, at p. 593. For this text (hereafter Loparev) and its authorship, see notes 76 and 84 below.

<sup>60</sup> See E. Kitzinger, *Byzantine Art in the Making* (Cambridge, Mass., 1977), pp. 81 ff.

<sup>61</sup> Georgius Cedrenus, *Compendium historiarum*, i, p. 685; Breckenridge, *The Numismatic Iconography of Justinian II*, p. 54.

"God gave me the kingdom and God has taken it away".<sup>62</sup> The self-abasement in his speech of abdication would have been unthinkable for Justinian.

Justin, too, provided the new setting for this change of direction. Above all, he initiated the building of a new throne-room in the imperial palace, the so-called *Chrysotriklinos*, or Golden Chamber, henceforth a chief location for imperial ceremonial.<sup>63</sup> Above the emperor's throne was the image of Christ; thus spectators could see the emperor seated on his throne as a living embodiment on earth of Christ in heaven, the true *imago Christi*.<sup>64</sup> Later on, the throne of the emperor came to carry the associations of the throne of Christ; on certain holy days such precious religious tokens as the image of Edessa, the True Cross, the Gospel book were solemnly placed upon it.<sup>65</sup> If some of the building and decoration of the *Chrysotriklinos* was actually completed by Justin's successor, Tiberius II, as is possible, that does not much matter, for the design and decoration were surely conceived as a whole. What is important is that during these crucial years of development, imperial ceremony received a new physical setting whose whole conception and decor expressed the idea of the emperor in his throne-room as a microcosm of God in heaven. The room itself was modelled not on previous palace architecture, but on ecclesiastical; its closest architectural parallels are churches and its pictorial decoration consisted of scenes from the life of Christ.<sup>66</sup>

The emperors knew how to exploit the visual image. The central object in the *Chrysotriklinos* was inevitably the imperial throne, probably just such a lyre-backed throne as we see in the sixth-century iconography of the enthroned Virgin.<sup>67</sup> So too, Justin's own coins heavily emphasize this quasi-religious theme of the enthroned emperor, indeed the enthroned emperor and empress, and Corippus devotes a long and weighty section in his panegyric to the religious symbolism of the imperial throne.<sup>68</sup> On the famous cross which Justin and Sophia sent to Rome, busts of the emperor and empress were

<sup>62</sup> John of Ephesus, *Historia ecclesiastica*, iii. 5; Theophylact Simocatta, *Historiae*, iii. 1.

<sup>63</sup> See Lavin, "The House of the Lord", esp. pp. 22-3; Breckenridge, *op. cit.*, pp. 54-5. I must thank Robin Cormack for discussing this with me.

<sup>64</sup> Corippus, *In laudem Iustini minoris*, ii. 425 ff.

<sup>65</sup> Grabar, *L'iconoclasme byzantin*, p. 34.

<sup>66</sup> See C. Mango, *Art of the Byzantine Empire, 312-1453* (Englewood Cliffs, 1972), p. 128. For the post-Iconoclastic decoration of the *Chrysotriklinos*, see *Anthologia Palatina*, i. 106 (given in Mango, *op. cit.*, p. 184). Architecturally the throne-room belongs with centralized churches and has been described, though an imperial building, as of "critical importance for the future of religious art": Lavin, *op. cit.*, p. 23.

<sup>67</sup> See A. Cutler, *Transfigurations: Studies in the Dynamics of Byzantine Iconography* (University Park, Pa., 1975), pp. 5 ff.

<sup>68</sup> W. Wroth, *Imperial Byzantine Coins in the British Museum*, 2 vols. (London, 1908), i, pp. 7 ff.; Corippus, *In laudem Iustini minoris*, iii. 194-207.



juxtaposed with the Lamb of God.<sup>69</sup> The message is always the same — to drive home the understanding of the emperor's special relationship with God, which gives him his earthly rule and which cannot be set aside.

## III

## ICONS AND MYTH-MAKING

If, then, these emperors were prepared to provide a new physical setting for their enhanced ceremonies, they were equally ready to enlist supernatural protectors. The Mother of God was the best of all; thus Justin II altered and refurbished the metropolitan churches of the Virgin at Blachernae and Chalcoprateia, and provided new housings for the city's relics, her robe and girdle.<sup>70</sup> Leo I and his family in the fifth century had had themselves depicted in mosaic round an enthroned Virgin in the apse of the chapel of the Virgin's robe at Blachernae, and Justinian and Theodora were shown with her on embroidered curtains in St. Sophia. But the late sixth-century emperors above all sponsored her cult in the city.<sup>71</sup> The Empress Sophia's prayer to the Virgin in Corippus's panegyric,<sup>72</sup> the feast of her Nativity newly introduced by Justin II and above all that of the *Koimesis* of the Virgin adopted by Maurice demonstrated imperial support for a growth in special attachment to the Virgin hardly experienced since the Council of Ephesus.<sup>73</sup> We must ask, then, in more detail how the emperors involved themselves in the cult.

A text relating to the year 619 allows us to see how intimately the Virgin's position in Constantinople in these years was connected with the imperial sphere of activity. In that year the Avars were threatening the outer walls of the city near the Virgin's church at Blachernae, which still lay unprotected. On 5th June the Emperor Heraclius suffered an ignominious blow when after going in great pomp and all

<sup>69</sup> See Cameron, "The Early Religious Policies of Justin II", pp. 56 ff.

<sup>70</sup> R. Janin, *La géographie ecclésiastique de l'empire byzantin*, i pt. 3, *Les églises et les monastères*, 2nd edn. (Paris, 1969), pp. 166 ff., 237 ff. The Virgin's robe and girdle in Constantinople: N. Baynes, "The Finding of the Virgin's Robe", in his *Byzantine Studies* (London, 1955), pp. 240-7; Averil Cameron, "The Virgin's Robe: An Episode in the History of Early Seventh-Century Constantinople" (forthcoming in *Byzantion*).

<sup>71</sup> See Averil Cameron, "The Cult of the Theotokos in Sixth-Century Constantinople", *Jl. Theol. Studies*, new ser., xxix (1978), pp. 79-108.

<sup>72</sup> Corippus, *In laudem Iustini minoris*, ii. 52-69.

<sup>73</sup> The standard study is by M. Jugie, *La mort et l'assomption de la Sainte Vierge* (Studi e Testi, cxiv, Rome, 1944); see also the excellent work by A. Wenger, *L'assomption de la Très Sainte Vierge dans la tradition byzantine du VI<sup>e</sup> au X<sup>e</sup> siècle* (Archives de l'orient chrétien, v, Paris, 1955). The striking feature is the suddenness with which the cult of the Virgin (and at the same time devotion to icons) springs to the forefront of religious life; see Victor Turner and Edith Turner, *Image and Pilgrimage in Christian Culture* (New York, 1978), p. 150: "visions appear at the point of major stress between contrary cultures and their major definitions of reality".

innocence to meet the Avar khagan at Heraclea, he had been ambushed and only just managed to escape, carrying his crown under his arm.<sup>74</sup> The Avars pursued him to the very walls of Constantinople and were even able to steal imperial vestments and ecclesiastical vessels.<sup>75</sup> It seemed that Blachernae itself was in danger and that its treasures should be removed for safe-keeping. A contemporary text<sup>76</sup> tells how the casket containing the relic of the Virgin's robe was removed at the same time as the other gold and silver treasures of the church, kept in St. Sophia for safety and then formally restored to Blachernae when the danger was over — probably on 2 July 620. The description of this deposition shows that the wondrous properties of the Virgin's robe, and especially its function as a palladium for the city, were thoroughly established and familiar by this date<sup>77</sup> — before the more famous Avar siege of 626. The writer tells the story as an exemplar of the Virgin's marvellous protection of the city as experienced in his own lifetime, and it ends with a prayer which breathes the sense of the city's dedication to her: "preserve your grace for your own city, and let not the eyes of men again see the holy church harmed, or this your humble city deserted".<sup>78</sup> The Virgin saved the city in 619 as well as in 626 — "turn away all attacks from it, making it manifest that the city is fortified by your power".<sup>79</sup> The writer asks the Virgin, "fount of life, treasury of salvation", to preserve the city, to give a peaceful and long

<sup>74</sup> Nicephorus, *Breviarium*, pp. 12 ff.

<sup>75</sup> Note the combination.

<sup>76</sup> Loparev; see note 59 above. See also Baynes, "The Finding of the Virgin's Robe", p. 245; Wenger, *op. cit.*, pp. 111 ff. (the best discussion). For an English translation with explanatory notes, see Cameron, "The Virgin's Robe". J. L. Van Diten, *Geschichte der Patriarchen von Sergios I. bis Johannes VI., 610-715* (Amsterdam, 1972), p. 16 note 54, ascribes the text without argument to the context of the siege of 626, but see Cameron, "The Virgin's Robe".

<sup>77</sup> For the Virgin as urban patroness, see S. MacCormack, "Roma, Constantinopolis, the Emperor and his Genius", *Classical Quart.*, xxv (1975), pp. 149-50, and for city cults, see L. Cracco Ruggini, "The Ecclesiastical Histories and Pagan Historiography, Providence and Miracles", *Athenaeum*, new ser., iv (1977), p. 123 note 71. The valuable study by the Turners, *Image and Pilgrimage in Christian Culture*, has much to say on Marian cult from an anthropological perspective but like many Marian studies is western-based and entirely omits the Virgin's cult in Constantinople and the east. Curiously, it would seem, it is Gregory of Tours who first tells of the miraculous powers of the Virgin's robe in Constantinople: Gregory of Tours, *In gloria martyrum*, i. 9 (M.G.H., *Scriptorum rerum Merovingiarum*, 4 vols., ed. W. Arndt, M. Bonnet and B. Krusch, Hanover, 1885-96, i pt. 2, p. 44); yet it would be wrong to underestimate the value of his evidence since it is clear that he had excellent sources for the late sixth-century east: see Averil Cameron, "The Byzantine Sources of Gregory of Tours", *Jl. Theol. Studies*, new ser., xxvi (1975), pp. 421-6; N. Baynes, review article in *Jl. Roman Studies*, xix (1929), pp. 231 ff. The sources for the robe as a wonder-working relic are discussed by C. Belting-Ihm, "Sul matris tute" (Abhandlungen der Heidelberger Akademie der Wissenschaften, philosophisch-historische Klasse, Heidelberg, 1976), but her dating of the main development to the eighth century is undoubtedly too late.

<sup>78</sup> Loparev, pp. 592, 610 (my italics).

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 611 (my italics).



reign to "our pious emperors",<sup>80</sup> long life to the holy patriarch, and answers to the prayers of all the people. Next to the emphasis placed on the Virgin as city protectress, the most unusual feature of the text for this date is its presentation of the emperor. He is completely absorbed into the liturgical life of the city. The decision to remove the treasures from Blachernae was taken only when Heraclius had prayed in another church of the Virgin "prone on the ground and dressed as an ordinary person";<sup>81</sup> as always, his prayer is accompanied by tears, the sign of piety.<sup>82</sup> When the emperor heard that the holy relic itself had been removed from the church — which had not, strangely enough, been the intention — he ran outside in great fear, threw himself on the ground and asked the patriarch to decide what to do. In the deposition procession which finally returned the relic to Blachernae, emperor and patriarch walked together, heading a line of civic officials, clergy and people; the patriarch carried the relic in his arms and the whole procession was bathed in tears.<sup>83</sup> Of course earlier emperors too had taken part in the deposition of relics. But now occasions such as these stand alone; what is more, they have come to bear the sole weight of civic and imperial unity.

If, then, the deposition of the Virgin's robe in 620 can stand for a change in the style of imperial public behaviour, the siege of Constantinople in 626 represents change in terms of the evolution of a new mythology. The same writer who recorded the deposition of the robe also wrote the address commemorating the victorious outcome of the siege.<sup>84</sup> Reporting the exhortation of the patriarch Sergius to the people he wrote:

no city can be guarded unless it is guarded by God; our enemies attack us with cavalry and chariots and a great multitude, but we will be strengthened in the name of the Lord God. For the Lord Himself will fight for us, and the Virgin Mother of God will be the defender of the city.<sup>85</sup>

When he set up the Virgin's picture on the Golden Gate the patriarch addressed the enemy:

the fighting is wholly against these pictures, you foreign and devilish troops. A woman, the Mother of God, will quell all your boldness and boasting with one command, for she is truly the Mother of Him who drowned Pharaoh with all his army in the Red Sea.<sup>86</sup>

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 611; they are called *pistoi basileis* (see note 58 above). See also *ibid.*, pp. 593, 599.

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 594.

<sup>82</sup> See note 31 above.

<sup>83</sup> Loparev, pp. 598, 601 ff.

<sup>84</sup> For the authorship of both texts, see Wenger, *L'assomption de la Très Sainte Vierge*, pp. 115 ff.; Barišić, "Le siège de Constantinople", p. 374; V. Vasilievskii, "Avaria, a ne Russkie, Theodor, a ne Georgii", *Vizantiiskii Vremennik*, iii (1896), pp. 83-95.

<sup>85</sup> Anon. Mai, p. 427.

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*

The city of Constantinople, the "eye of the Christian faith", was thus justified in expecting the protection of God and His Mother. At every doubtful moment in the next few days the Virgin was there, fighting for her city; every part of the story demonstrated her power to the inhabitants and proved the mysteries of God's mercy.<sup>87</sup> Even the retreating and discomfited khagan admitted that no one can fight against the Virgin.<sup>88</sup>

But the most telling passage in the whole text is its ending, when the author addresses the prophet Isaiah:

But you, wise Isaiah, as you *prefigured* for me when I began my speech the deliverance of this city, so now also set your seal on my words with your conclusion and announce the good news of safety and peace for the city in the future. "Thus speaks the Lord our God: I will defend this city to save it for me and for my servant David".<sup>89</sup> For our emperor is a new David in his piety to God and his clemency towards his subjects. And the Lord will crown him with victories like David, and his son who reigns with him,<sup>90</sup> making him wise and peaceable like Solomon, and bestowing on him and on his father piety and orthodoxy. Ask this, prophet, from the God of Solomon who knows no jealousy, and beseech the Virgin, whom you foresaw with the eyes of the mind to be truly the Mother of God, and proclaimed in words of prophecy,<sup>91</sup> to save the city for ever and its people, who are sinners, but who always take refuge in God and the Virgin, from age to age, Amen.<sup>92</sup>

The precise events of the year 626 are thus subsumed into sacred time; the Virgin is fulfilling Old Testament prophecy, the emperor shows himself another David.<sup>93</sup> Though in fact Heraclius was away from the city during the siege, the author of the address here brings him to the forefront of his listeners' minds; still absent on campaign when the oration was delivered, it is nonetheless the emperor, not the patriarch, who occupies the most prominent position that could be accorded to a human in relation to the divine. His function is unequivocally to enact

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 429-34.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 434.

<sup>89</sup> Isaiah xxxvii. 35.

<sup>90</sup> The young Constantine, left behind in Constantinople: Anon. Mai, p. 425.

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 437. See Isaiah vii. 14: "Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son". The homily opens on the same theme:

Isaiah the noblest of the prophets spoke, seeing far ahead through the prophetic grace of the Holy Spirit the beneficence of God the Father, that He would take flesh as the Word of God and be born from the Virgin. "Get thee up into the high mountain to tell the good tidings to Zion . . . (Isaiah xl. 9).

<sup>92</sup> Anon. Mai, p. 437 (my italics).

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 425, 428, 435, 437. Besides the emphatic conclusion, the image of David as a model for Heraclius is kept before the listeners throughout the homily. Of course previous emperors had been seen as David (see Dvornik, *Early Christian and Byzantine Political Philosophy*, ii, pp. 797, 823), but the developed typology of the Byzantine emperor as David came only later: see the inscription of Basil I in the Kainourgion, part of the imperial palace (see Mango, *Art of the Byzantine Empire*, p. 198, on *Vita Basilii*, ch. 89). Whether or not the famous "David plates" of the reign of Heraclius relate specifically to the emperor — see Kitzinger, *Byzantine Art in the Making*, p. 150; S. Spain Alexander, "Heraclius, Byzantine Imperial Ideology and the David Plates", *Speculum*, lii (1977), pp. 217-37 — this text gives an exceptionally emphatic and early literary treatment of the theme.



the typology of the Old Testament, and his defining characteristics are henceforth to be, in the words of the address, piety and orthodoxy.

The Virgin's cult, her robe and her icons, localized in the capital city, were thus drawn into the imperial sphere. Was this not also likely to be true of other icons, whose cult, both in the capital and the provinces, takes off at this precise moment too?

Responding to a tendency to overstress imperial example as a causative factor in the striking increase in devotion to icons in the late sixth century, and reacting also against the temptation to make Constantinople the key to all else in the empire, Peter Brown offers instead a seductive general analysis of the rise of icons in social and psychological terms.<sup>94</sup> They represent for him signs of a centrifugal tendency in the empire, and express the need for local and individual attachments, as well as the collective loyalties of individual provincial towns. The fate of the icon is thus part of the story of the late antique city.<sup>95</sup> Now while it is surely true that imperial sponsorship could hardly by itself go far towards explaining the vast increase in icon worship from the late sixth century onwards, I suspect nonetheless that we may still be led to a more sympathetic view of imperial involvement than this brilliant analysis would permit.

Such public and integrating ceremonies as the deposition of the Virgin's robe in 620, or the great thanksgiving ceremony after the Avar siege, when on 7 August 627 the Akathistos hymn was solemnly performed with its newly composed preface proclaiming the deeds of the warrior-Virgin,<sup>96</sup> gave the cult of the Virgin a special position in the mythology of the capital city. The same could be true of certain public icons; in fact the cult of the Virgin was itself now expressed as much by icons as by the relics which the city had long possessed. In 626 her picture was placed on the city gate and paraded round the walls,<sup>97</sup> and as we have seen, her icons themselves were felt in some way to have brought about the victory. In 610 Heraclius's victory over the tyrant Phocas had also been attributed to the protection of pictures of the Virgin.<sup>98</sup> But in 626 the Virgin's icons were flanked by pictures of Christ. The patriarch carried round the walls not only a likeness of the

<sup>94</sup> Brown, "A Dark-Age Crisis".

<sup>95</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 18, 21.

<sup>96</sup> See p. 6 above.

<sup>97</sup> Anon. Mai, p. 427. The best discussion of the confused sources for the icons used in this siege is still that by A. Pertusi, *Giorgio di Pisidia: Poemi, I* (Studia patristica et byzantina, vii, Ettal, 1960), p. 143; see also E. Von Dobschütz, *Christusbilder: Untersuchungen zur christlichen Legende* (Texte und Untersuchungen, iii, Leipzig, 1899), pp. 52 ff., 128 ff.; Grabar, *L'iconoclasme byzantin*, pp. 31 ff.; Van Dieten, *Geschichte der Patriarchen*, p. 15 note 49; George of Pisidia begins his poem on the siege with the contention that a picture of the Mother of God will tell us all we need to know. George of Pisidia, *Bellum Avaricum*, 1-9.

<sup>98</sup> George of Pisidia, *Heraclius*, ii. 14; Theophanes, *Chronographia*, i, p. 298. See Grabar, *L'iconoclasme byzantin*, p. 35.

Virgin and Child but also an *acheiropoietos* icon of Christ.<sup>99</sup> When the Emperor Heraclius had left for the war in Persia in 622 — a traumatic moment, for the people of Constantinople were accustomed to having their emperor with them in the city — he held in his hands the famous Camuliana image of Christ, but committed his family and his city to the protection of the Virgin.<sup>100</sup>

In the context of Constantinople it is not icons which come first, in isolation. Rather, this use of icons is secondary to, and itself expresses, a growing conviction of the special protection of the city by God and the Virgin. The idea of Constantinople as the "God-guarded city" makes its first appearance precisely in these years,<sup>101</sup> and it was a conception which was to last as long as the city itself. It was natural that images of Christ and the Virgin would find a central place on public occasions when the city's very life was at stake, and natural too that these occasions would be simultaneously religious and imperial. And if icons were seen to be thus efficacious in the preservation of the capital, how likely they were to perform the same services in other cities, not necessarily in opposition to or reaction against the failure of central government. Icons, in other words, could be powerful symbols of integration.

Before the great siege of 626, with its concentration on the power of the Virgin, we find the emperors of this period turning, like everyone else, to the new icons of Christ "not made with human hands". The chief of these, the Camuliana image, first known in Syria in the 550s, was brought to Constantinople as early as 574.<sup>102</sup> By the reign of Maurice at the end of the sixth century it was being carried into battle by the emperor's kinsman, the general Philippicus, and soon afterwards used again by his successor, Priscus.<sup>103</sup> Thus André Grabar argued that these icons came into being precisely in the military context of the Byzantine wars with Persia in the late sixth century.<sup>104</sup> But that is to take too narrow a view. The use of these icons on the field of battle was rather another of the ways in which the sixth-century emperors associated themselves with a religious development already under way. Although we have no testimony to the other

<sup>99</sup> Anon. Mai, p. 428.

<sup>100</sup> George of Pisidia, *Bellum Persicum*, i. 139 ff. (clearly a Christ-icon, not an icon of the Virgin); Anon. Mai, pp. 424, 425.

<sup>101</sup> Corippus, *In laudem Iustini minoris*, iii. 333; see N. Baynes, "The Supernatural Defenders of Constantinople", in his *Byzantine Studies*, pp. 248-60.

<sup>102</sup> F. J. Hamilton and E. W. Brooks, *The Syriac Chronicle known as that of Zachariah of Mytilene* (London, 1899), p. 321. See Von Dobschütz, *op. cit.*, pp. 40 ff. Its arrival in Constantinople: Georgius Cedrenus, *Compendium historiarum*, i, p. 685; see Kitzinger, "The Cult of Images in the Period before Iconoclasm", pp. 125 ff.

<sup>103</sup> Theophylact Simocatta, *Historiae*, ii. 3. 4; i. 11.

<sup>104</sup> Grabar, *L'iconoclasme byzantin*, pp. 31 ff. Grabar would see this as part of a Constantinian "revival" (that is, the icon takes on the role of the *labarum*, the Christian standard of Constantine).

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great *acheiropoietos* of the period, the image of Edessa, before the 590s, it too may have existed earlier, in or near 544.<sup>105</sup> Like the Virgin in the siege of Constantinople in 626 this image was believed to have saved its city from the Persians in 544, and whether or not this can be proved to have been a contemporary belief (I think it must have been, despite Procopius's silence)<sup>106</sup> the very fact that the Edessenes held to it as one of their most precious articles of faith during the years that we are considering proves that the function and importance of icons in focusing city patriotism might be much the same in capital and provinces alike.

We should not seek too exclusive an explanation. The warrior-maiden was far from being the only aspect under which the Virgin was honoured in late sixth-century Constantinople, nor was it only connected with the siege of 626. On seals, for instance, she had already taken over the associations of the pagan Victory which had preceded her.<sup>107</sup> And indeed icons must often have served (in Constantinople too) to channel private and local attachments. But the history of the imperial capital in the late sixth and early seventh centuries shows us with total clarity how both icons and cults could themselves become the focus of urban identity, which in this vital case came to express not merely an urban but also an imperial consensus.

## IV

## A "SIMPLIFICATION OF CULTURE"?

Icons, then, could well be expressive of the sense of cultural integration which I see as taking over at the end of the sixth century. Another manifestation of the same impulse could be seen in literature. For the division of literary genres into "classical" and "ecclesiastical" still observed, though sometimes indeed with effort and difficulty, under

<sup>105</sup> First mentioned in the 590s by Evagrius, *Historia ecclesiastica*, ed. J. Bidez and L. Parmentier (London, 1898; repr. Amsterdam, 1964), iv. 27. See Von Dobschütz, *op. cit.*, pp. 102 ff.; S. Runciman, "Some Remarks on the Image of Edessa", *Cambridge Hist. Jl.*, iii (1931), pp. 238-52; M. Mundell, "Monophysite Church Decoration", in A. A. Bryer and J. Herrin (eds.), *Iconoclasm* (Birmingham, 1977), p. 65. Many mysteries surround the early history of this icon, which seems to have originated as a painting, and was only later held to be a cloth bearing the imprint of Christ's face.

<sup>106</sup> Procopius describes the Persian attack on Edessa in *Wars*, ii. 26-7, but does not mention the icon. Crucial for its date is the sixth- or seventh-century Syriac hymn on the church of Edessa mentioning the image: see A. Grabar, "Le témoignage d'une hymne syriaque sur l'architecture de la cathédrale d'Edesse au VI<sup>e</sup> siècle et sur la symbolique de l'édifice chrétien", *Cahiers archéologiques*, ii (1947), pp. 41-67. For an English translation, see Mango, *Art of the Byzantine Empire*, pp. 57 ff.

<sup>107</sup> Grabar, *L'iconoclasm byzantin*, p. 35. For victory symbolism applied to the Virgin, see Frolow, "La dédicace de Constantinople dans la tradition byzantine", pp. 98-9.

Justinian, now broke down, as the "Roman" side of imperial ideology fell away. From now on — not without discomfort at first, naturally — it became more normal for literary works of the highest level, even political history and panegyric, to express the Christian modes of thought which may have been matters of daily experience but which had until now been virtually excluded from classicizing literature.<sup>108</sup> What are the reasons for this change? Why should it have taken place precisely at this time?

One approach is to see this development in terms of the defeat of the educated élite by the tastes of the masses — "popular devotion" in the case of religious matters, and "simplification" as applied to literary culture.<sup>109</sup> It is then tempting to depict the emperors of the late sixth century as "giving way", or at least as responding, to the wishes of the populace at large, while it is further implied that the visual, and therefore "direct" symbol, such as the icon, which could appeal to all equally, replaced the exclusive literary culture of the classical period.<sup>110</sup>

Such an explanation has the merit of explaining in simple terms a complex set of changes. But we must take care. The court literature of the reign of Heraclius, though certainly different from that of Justinian, is very far from simple. Its chief practitioners, the poet-panegyrist George of Pisidia and the historian Theophylact Simocatta, are if anything chiefly known for their learned obscurity.<sup>111</sup> The

<sup>108</sup> See, for example, Averil Cameron, *Agathias* (Oxford, 1970), pp. 136 ff. Many good pointers to the literature of the period are to be found in G. L. Kustas, *Studies in Byzantine Rhetoric* (Thessaloniki, 1973), and see now R. Browning, "The Language of Byzantine Literature", in S. Vryonis, Jr. (ed.), *Byzantina kai Metabyzantina*, i, *The "Past" in Medieval and Modern Greek Culture* (Malibu, 1978), pp. 103-33.

<sup>109</sup> Brown, *The World of Late Antiquity*, pp. 174, 180 ff., 184: a "sea-change" which affected the whole structure of society. Though Brown himself has since criticized appeals to the concept of "popular beliefs" — notably in his "The Rise and Function of the Holy Man in Late Antiquity", *Jl. Roman Studies*, lxi (1971), p. 81, and his *Learning and Imagination* (Inaugural Lecture, Roy. Holloway College, May 1977, London, 1977) — one may perhaps still take these influential pages as an emphatic statement of a view still widely current.

<sup>110</sup> Brown, *The World of Late Antiquity*, pp. 181, 184. Kitzinger, "The Cult of Images in the Period before Iconoclasm", pp. 119 ff., has written of the emperors reacting to animistic ideas "carried by the broad masses of the people", a kind of "groundswell". But there is no reason for supposing that only one class of society was affected.

<sup>111</sup> For George of Pisidia, see Pertusi, *Georgio di Pisidia: Poemi*, I; for Theophylact Simocatta, see O. Veh, *Untersuchungen zu dem byzantinischen Historiker Theophylaktos Simokattes* (Wissenschaftliche Beilage zum Jahresbericht 1956-7 des humanistischen Gymnasiums Fürth im Bayern, Fürth im Bayern, 1957); Z. V. Udaltsova, "K voprosu o mirovozzrenii vizantiiskogo istorika VII v. Feofilakta Simokatty", *Zbornik radova vizantoloshkog instituta*, i (1968), pp. 29-45; Z. V. Udaltsova, "Le monde vu par les historiens byzantins du IV<sup>e</sup> au VII<sup>e</sup> siècle", *Byzantinoslavica*, xxxiii (1972), pp. 193 ff.; Z. V. Udaltsova, *Ideino-politicheskaya bor'ba v rannei Vizantii po dannym istorikov IV-VII vv.* (Moscow, 1974). There is no overall study of the literature of the reign of Heraclius.



change may not lie only in a loss of skill: these writers actually had a different aim. Both George and Theophylact, in their clumsy way, reached a synthesis of contemporary Christian thinking and their classical literary heritage which was out of the question for Procopius and still too difficult for Agathias writing in the 570s. In the reign of Justinian, the hymn-writer Romanos felt the cleavage so deeply that he could attack the classics and proclaim the victory of the "Galilaeans";<sup>112</sup> "Nazareth confounds Corinth".<sup>113</sup> George of Pisidia, on the other hand, though a deacon of St. Sophia, can evoke Demosthenes without a qualm.<sup>114</sup> In the late sixth-century west, Gregory of Tours shared Romanos's attitude.<sup>115</sup> But Theophylact feels able to preface a full-scale political history with a philosophical dialogue crediting his patron, the patriarch Sergius, with the revival of theology.<sup>116</sup> Thus we must not interpret the demise of secular historiography as a separate genre after Theophylact in terms of a take-over of the educated élite by the masses (for whom "monkish chronicles" are said to have been intended), still less in relation to a schematized transition from an élitist, aristocratic system to feudalism;<sup>117</sup> rather, it was part of a deeper and more complex impulse towards integration perceptible already in the late sixth century.<sup>118</sup> By

<sup>112</sup> See P. Maas, "Die Chronologie der Hymnen des Romanos", *Byzantinische Zeitschrift*, xv (1906), pp. 21-2; E. Topping, "The Apostle Peter, Justinian and Romanos the Melodist", *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies*, ii (1976), pp. 12 ff.

<sup>113</sup> Romanos, *carm.* 31 (ed. P. Maas and C. A. Trypanis, *Sancti Romani Melodi Cantica, Cantica genuina*, Oxford, 1963, p. 247): Christian teaching defeats pagan learning. Similarly Christian rhetoricians would congratulate themselves on their faith and orthodoxy in contrast to pagan writers: G. L. Kustas, "The Function and Evolution of Byzantine Rhetoric", *Viator*, i (1970), pp. 55-73. Grosdidier de Matons is right to point out that passages like this in Romanos do not show ignorance of the classics but rather a deliberate disdain: Grosdidier de Matons, *Romanos le Mélode*, p. 184. Browning also emphasizes that the success of Romanos's hymns at all social levels indicates a changed idea of what constitutes acceptable literary expression: Browning, "The Language of Byzantine Literature", p. 113.

<sup>114</sup> George of Pisidia, *Bellum Persicum*, ii. 1-4.

<sup>115</sup> Gregory of Tours, *In gloria martyrum* (M.G.H., *Scriptores rerum Merovingiarum*, i pt. 2, preface); see W. C. McDermott, "The World of Gregory of Tours", in E. Peters (ed.), *Monks, Bishops and Pagans: Christian Culture in Gaul and Italy, 500-700* (Philadelphia, 1975), pp. 117 ff., 130 ff.

<sup>116</sup> See the discussion by P. Lemerle, *Le premier humanisme byzantin* (Paris, 1971), pp. 78-9. Another example of literary preciousness combined with pietistic attitudes is to be found in the anacreontic poems of Sophronius, patriarch of Jerusalem: see Chadwick, "John Moschus and his Friend Sophronius the Sophist".

<sup>117</sup> On Malalas as a "popular" writer, see Z. V. Udaltsova, "La chronique de Jean Malalas dans la Russie de Kiev", *Byzantion*, xxxv (1965), pp. 575-91. And against H.-G. Beck, "Zur byzantinischen Mönchschronik", in C. Bauer (ed.), *Speculum historicum* (Munich, 1965), pp. 188-97. The fact that some works were written in a Greek that approximated to the spoken language (see Browning, *op. cit.*, p. 112) does not in itself prove that they were aimed at "the masses".

<sup>118</sup> The works of the two major ecclesiastical historians of the period, John of Ephesus and Evagrius Scholasticus, clearly show the breaking down of barriers formerly strictly observed between genres. Neither has received a modern study, but see

(cont. on p. 27)

contrast Justinian's reign presents agonistic features of culture and society which by the latter part of the century were on the way to resolution.

It has been suggested that the process of "simplification" followed on from the demise of the classically educated élite which up to the time of Justinian still filled government and provincial administrative positions<sup>119</sup> — if no élite, then a vacuum, to be filled by popular values. It is assumed that the later writers were simply unable to match up to earlier classicizing standards. But it would be better to approach the question more positively. In the first place, it is by no means clear that a classical education did become significantly less available by the end of the century, even allowing for the considerable impact of Justinian's measures against pagans and intellectuals.<sup>120</sup> Recent scholarship tends to argue for the continuance of classical teaching in Constantinople, and to deny the existence as yet of a special patriarchal school of theology;<sup>121</sup> but even if such a school did already exist, it is clear enough that it taught secular as well as theological subjects, and that both kinds of teaching went on in the same place, or at least in the same area of the city.<sup>122</sup> Just as the

(note 118 cont.)

P. Allen, "Evagrius Scholasticus the Church Historian" (Univ. of Oxford D.Phil. thesis, 1977). It is as misleading to treat secular historians without reference to ecclesiastical (Udal'tsova) as to neglect John of Ephesus because he wrote in Syriac (F. Tinnefeld, *Kategorien der Kaiserkritik in der byzantinischen Historiographie*, Munich, 1971). For ecclesiastical history, see now F. Winkelmann, "Die Kirchengeschichtswerke im oströmischen Reich", *Byzantinoslavica*, xxxvii (1976), pp. 1 ff., 172 ff.

<sup>119</sup> Brown, *The World of Late Antiquity*, pp. 156, 180 ff. I am not sure what could be meant by Brown's reference to "increased professionalization" in administration (*ibid.*, p. 156): if anything, this very "scholar-gentry" itself consisted of professional civil servants, no more amateur than the Oxford Greats men who used to fill the best posts in the British Foreign Office. For the sixth-century bureaucracy, see T. Carney, *Bureaucracy in Traditional Society* (Lawrence, Kan., 1971); C. N. Tsirpanlis, "John Lydus on the Imperial Administration", *Byzantion*, xlv (1974), pp. 479-501.

<sup>120</sup> See Lemerle, *op. cit.*, pp. 68-73; J. Irmscher, "Die geistige Situation der Intelligenz im Zeitalter Justinians", in F. Altheim and R. Stiehl (eds.), *Die Araber in der alten Welt*, 5 vols. (Berlin, 1964-9), iv, pp. 334-62; and for the later sixth century, see I. Rochow, "Die Heidenprozesse unter den Kaisern Tiberios II und Maurice", in H. Köpstein and F. Winkelmann (eds.), *Studien zum 7. Jahrhundert in Byzanz* (Berlin, 1976), pp. 120-30.

<sup>121</sup> Lemerle, *op. cit.*, pp. 85 ff.; similarly H.-G. Beck, "Bildung und Theologie im frühmittelalterlichen Byzanz", in P. Wirth (ed.), *Polychronion. Festschrift F. Dölger* (Heidelberg, 1966), pp. 72-81; P. Speck, *Die kaiserliche Universität von Konstantinopel* (Munich, 1974); P. Speck, review of Lemerle, *op. cit.*, in *Byzantinische Zeitschrift*, lxxvii (1974), pp. 385-93.

<sup>122</sup> R. Browning, "The Patriarchal School at Constantinople in the Twelfth Century", *Byzantion*, xxxii (1962), pp. 167 ff. Agathias indicates that lectures on theological subjects would naturally have been given in and around the royal school, where classical teaching took place: Agathias, *Histories*, ed. B. G. Niebuhr (L.S.H. 3, Bonn, 1828), ii. 29. Theological books were sold there too: Zacharias Rhetor, *Vita de Sévère*, ed. M. Kugener (Patrologia orientalis, ii pt. 1, Paris, 1907), p. 8. It was also the scene of theological disputation: Cyril of Scythopolis, *Vita Sabae*, ed. E. Schwartz (Leipzig, 1939), p. 176 (in 531).



traditional classicizing literature came to admit "non-classical" — that is, religious — terms and subject matter, so the "classical elite" was itself transformed. Even in the days of Justinian it had been something of a chimera, if the term implies the holding of distinct values. Of the bureaucrats who composed correct Greek epigrams in the middle of the sixth century, and were thus certainly classically educated and surely an elite, some at least were ready to admit Christian material in their poems, and it is to one of them that we owe one of our earliest testimonies to the growing cult of icons.<sup>123</sup> Already under Justinian it is the bishops, not civil officials, who are taking control in the cities of the empire, and with the government's blessing.<sup>124</sup> They are the elite, just as much as the bureaucrats themselves,<sup>125</sup> and many of them must at this period have received a classical education. By the late sixth century the "elite" — that is, the governing class of the empire — was an amalgam of the lay and the ecclesiastical, in which both sides had learned to be less exclusive than they may previously have been. Only when we begin to see the unifying social role of eastern bishops in the late sixth century as clearly as we do that of their western counterparts, and as forcefully as we have been taught to see the

<sup>123</sup> Agathias, *Anthologia Palatina*, i. 34, on which see Averil Cameron and Alan Cameron, "The 'Cycle' of Agathias", *Jl. Hellenic Studies*, lxxxvi (1966), pp. 6-25, and "Further Thoughts on the 'Cycle' of Agathias", *Jl. Hellenic Studies*, lxxxvii (1967), p. 131; R. C. McCail, "The 'Cycle' of Agathias Reconsidered", *Jl. Hellenic Studies*, lxxxix (1969), pp. 87-96; Cameron, *Agathias*, pp. 12 ff.; C. Mango, *Byzantine Literature as a Distorting Mirror* (Inaugural Lecture, Univ. of Oxford, Oxford, 1974), pp. 6 ff. ("highbrow" literature in the sixth century). B. Baldwin, "Four Problems in Agathias", *Byzantinische Zeitschrift*, lxx (1977), pp. 295 ff., esp. pp. 298 ff., would seem to put back the publication of the *Cycle* to the reign of Justinian, but leaves out of account the poems which specifically refer to Justin II and Sophia. For Christianity in the *Cycle* poems, see Cameron, *Agathias*, p. 5; R. C. McCail, "The Erotic and Ascetic Poetry of Agathias Scholasticus", *Byzantion*, xli (1971), pp. 205-67; J. A. Madden, "Macedonius Consul and Christianity", *Mnemosyne*, xxx (1977), pp. 153-9. There is no pressing reason to think that Christian poems were excluded from the *Cycle*, even though they have become detached in the extant *Anthologia Palatina*.

<sup>124</sup> K. L. Noethlichs, "Materialien zum Bischofsbild aus den spätantiken Rechtsquellen", *Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum*, xvi (1973), pp. 28-59; A. Hohlweg, "Bischof und Stadtherr im frühen Byzanz", *Jahrbuch für österreichischen Byzantinistik*, xx (1971), pp. 51-62; F. Dölger, "Die frühbyzantinische und byzantinisch beeinflusste Stadt", in his *Paraspora* (Ettal, 1961), pp. 107-39; J. L. Boonjama, "Christian Philanthropy: A Study of Justinian's Welfare Policy and the Church", *Byzantina*, vii (1975), pp. 345 ff.; Brown, *Relics and Social Status in the Age of Gregory of Tours*, pp. 17 ff.

<sup>125</sup> But little has yet been done on the social background or intellectual equipment of the clergy at this date. The following are the best guides: H.-G. Beck, "Kirche und Klerus im staatlichen Leben von Byzanz", *Revue des études byzantines*, xxiv (1966), pp. 1-24; H.-G. Beck, "Die frühbyzantinische Kirche", in K. Baus et al., *Die Reichskirche nach Konstantin der Grosse*, 2 vols. (Handbuch der Kirchengeschichte, ed. H. Jedin, ii, Freiburg, 1973-5), ii, pp. 3-92. See also F. Winkelmann, "Kirche und Gesellschaft in Byzanz vom Ende des 6. bis zum Beginn des 8. Jahrhunderts", *Klio*, lix (1977), pp. 477-89. For bishops and clergy within the social structure of towns, see Dölger, *op. cit.*, pp. 107-39.

"outsider" or marginal role of holy men, shall we realize that the cultural changes of the period could have a positive, even a revitalizing side.

## V

## REASONS AND EXPLANATIONS

"Icons in the late sixth and seventh centuries", we are told, "expressed the continuing needs of the ancient city".<sup>126</sup> And the greatest of the cities of the empire was Constantinople. So too the Virgin's cult, as it took shape in Constantinople, was an urban cult,<sup>127</sup> shaped in the imagination on the pattern of the defence of the city against invaders. She takes possession of the city walls with her icon; she "walls" the city with her power;<sup>128</sup> she defends it with her robe;<sup>129</sup> after 626 her own church of Blachernae was walled in with a real wall of defence.<sup>130</sup> The walls are both real and psychological, for we can see that for the late sixth-century emperors cultural integration was a form of defence. If they defined their own position and localized it in the city by marking out its urban space in their growing and regularized ceremonial, above all if they brought the imperial and the liturgical spheres closer and closer together, there was the greatest hope for strength and continuity. In this context icons were important: the bringing of the Camuliana image to Constantinople was an essential step for a capital city which, lacking the apostolic association as well as the intellectual traditions of the other great eastern cities, was in urgent need of urban symbols of its own.<sup>131</sup>

So, rather than interpreting the late sixth century as a time of central weakness and general insecurity,<sup>132</sup> we might look for positive

<sup>126</sup> Brown, "A Dark-Age Crisis", p. 21.

<sup>127</sup> Just as the Virgin can be the protectress of a village in modern Spain: W. A. Christian, Jr., *Person and God in a Spanish Valley* (New York, 1972), p. 175. Her function, in city or in village, is to "bind the people together".

<sup>128</sup> Loparev, p. 611.

<sup>129</sup> In the Akathistos hymn she is called the "shelter of the world", an idea greatly developed in later centuries. In the words of Joseph the Hymnographer (ninth century) her robe is a "solid rampart" protecting the "queen of cities": Joseph the Hymnographer, *Mariale* (P.G., cv, Paris, 1862, col. 1009). By this time she was believed to have walked the walls of the city as early as the fifth century: Belting-Ihm, "Sub matris tutela", pp. 39 ff.

<sup>130</sup> *Chronicon Paschale*, i, p. 726.

<sup>131</sup> For the slow development of Constantinople as a city with its own ideological strength, see G. Dagron, *Naissance d'une capitale* (Paris, 1974). For the late sixth- and early seventh-century sense of the localization of the emperor in his city, see Corippus, *In laudem Iustini minoris*, i. 181, *urbis et orbis . . . curia* ("his city and the world" — of Justinian); *ibid.*, ii. 149, *lux altera fulsit a turbe* ("a second sun shone from the city" — Justin II raised on a shield at his inauguration); *ibid.*, p. 424 (Heraclius commends his city to God and the Virgin); *ibid.*, p. 425 (a wise king is the foundation of his people and his city).

<sup>132</sup> Recently reiterated in Kitzinger, *Byzantine Art in the Making*, p. 105.



factors, not only in Constantinople, but elsewhere too. What holds for the later seventh century, after decades of invasion, may not, after all, hold for the sixth, nor does the fact that the eighth-century emperors saw devotion to icons as a threat to their central authority necessarily mean that Constantinople had already lost its hold on the cities in the sixth century.<sup>133</sup>

It may then be more fruitful to view late sixth- and early seventh-century cities in a different way. The evidence for this vast topic is very far from being clear, still less complete.<sup>134</sup> In some areas external factors can easily be blamed for a collapse of urban life. Thus in Greece disaster struck in the late sixth century in the shape of Slav invasions,<sup>135</sup> while in Asia Minor the life of many early Byzantine urban centres was dramatically curtailed by the Persian invasions of the early seventh century.<sup>136</sup> But there are some indications that the shape of urban life was already changing from within. The open spaces and streets of the classical city were becoming otiose, and were increasingly overlaid by private dwellings. Often the stone of classical buildings now no longer used was taken and used in the building of

<sup>133</sup> Brown, "A Dark-Age Crisis". Approved, for example, by S. P. Brock, in Bryer and Herrin (eds.), *Iconoclasm*, p. 57; for critical reactions, however, see Haldon, "Some Remarks on the Background to the Iconoclastic Controversy"; S. Gero, "Notes on Byzantine Iconoclasm in the Eighth Century", *Byzantion*, xlv (1974), pp. 23 ff.; P. Henry, "What was the Iconoclast Controversy all about?", *Church History*, xiv (1976), pp. 16 ff.

<sup>134</sup> Debate has moved from the seventh-century cities — where the over-strong thesis of rupture proposed by A. P. Kazhdan, "Vizantiiskie goroda v VII-XI vekakh", *Sovetskaya arkhologiya*, xxi (1954), pp. 164-83, was somewhat toned down subsequently, notably by G. Ostrogorsky, "Byzantine Cities in the Early Middle Ages", *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, xiii (1959), pp. 47-66 — to the late sixth-century situation. D. Claude, *Die byzantinische Stadt im 6. Jahrhundert* (Byzantinisches Archiv, xiii, Munich, 1969), and Foss, "The Persians in Asia Minor and the End of Antiquity", "The Fall of Sardis in 616" and "Archaeology and the 'Twenty Cities' of Byzantine Asia", stress continuity up to the early seventh century. But literary evidence for plague, earthquake and invasion tallies with archaeological evidence indicating considerable change before the end of the sixth century. Final judgements are far from possible yet, but see Patlagean, *Pauvreté économique et pauvreté sociale*, pp. 301 ff.; G. L. Kurbatov, *Osnovnye problemy vnutrennego razvitiya vizantiiskogo goroda* (Leningrad, 1971). Clearly the internal logic of Byzantine towns and the nature of the élite that ran them are interconnected.

<sup>135</sup> Homer A. Thompson, "Athenian Twilight: A.D. 267-600", *Jl. Roman Studies*, xlix (1959), pp. 61-72; Alison Frantz, "From Paganism to Christianity in the Temples of Athens", *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, xix (1965), pp. 185-206; D. M. Metcalf, "The Slavonic Threat to Greece circa 580: Some Evidence from Athens", *Hesperia*, xxxi (1962), pp. 134-57; S. Hood, "Isles of Refuge in the Early Byzantine Period", *Ann. Brit. School Athens*, lxxv (1970), pp. 37-45.

<sup>136</sup> See the various works of Clive Foss already cited, and also his *Byzantine and Turkish Sardis* (Cambridge, Mass., 1976), and his "Late Antique and Early Byzantine Ankara", *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, xxxi (1977), pp. 29-87. Foss's survey, "Archaeology and the 'Twenty Cities' of Byzantine Asia", in fact provides much evidence to counter his general thesis (most strongly expressed in "The Persians in Asia Minor and the End of Antiquity") of continuity up to the Persian invasions.

defences.<sup>137</sup> The very configuration of Byzantine urban life was shifting. The newer pattern replacing the open unfortified sites of the Roman period consisted of a fortified *kastron* of some kind, a central church and private housing, all protected by secure walls, for which stone from disused classical buildings lay ready to be used.<sup>138</sup> It was an urban organization that recognized the new importance of bishops,<sup>139</sup> the centrality of the church in the public life of the town, and the tendency of public ceremonial to become religious ceremonial. Nor had these social changes only begun in the later sixth century, for Procopius, the "sceptic", gives us enough examples of the lead taken by small-town bishops in time of war, especially their processional rallies with relics or icons, to show that the behaviour of the patriarch Sergius in the siege of Constantinople in 626 was merely the equivalent of what bishops had long been doing in beleaguered provincial towns.<sup>140</sup> The institutional church rose to the occasion in the towns, took the lead, and used icons and relics to focus the loyalty of the population.<sup>141</sup>

It is tempting to see the shift in urban life towards the ecclesiastical and the defensive as the product of gloom and anxiety. Ernst Kitzinger writes in such terms about contemporary Byzantine art: "still and lonely figures, gaunt and remote"; "a chill has descended".<sup>142</sup> Yet

<sup>137</sup> See Foss, "Archaeology and the 'Twenty Cities' of Byzantine Asia", pp. 472 ff.; excavations at Anemurium show a decline in the use of public buildings from the second half of the sixth century: James Russell, "Excavations at Anemurium, 1976", *Classical News and Notes*, xxi (1977), pp. 5-14; James Russell, "Anemurium, 1976", *Anatolian Studies*, xxvii (1977), pp. 25-9. For Byzantine shops and colonnaded streets, see Foss, *Byzantine and Turkish Sardis*, pp. 16, 42 ff.; Claude, *op. cit.*, pp. 60-8.

<sup>138</sup> See, for example, J. M. Cook, *The Troad* (Oxford, 1973), pp. 371 ff., 383 (a move to the countryside); G. Gomolka, "Bemerkungen zur Situation der spätantiken Stadt und Siedlungen in Nordbulgarien und ihren Weiterleben am Ende des 6. Jahrhunderts", in Köpstein and Winkelmann (eds.), *Studien zum 7. Jahrhundert in Byzanz*, pp. 35-42; Claude, *op. cit.*, pp. 45 ff., 72 ff., 85 ff.; Patlagean, *op. cit.*, pp. 231 ff.

<sup>139</sup> See, for example, Procopius, *Wars*, ii. 6. 17. For another such ecclesiastical activist, see G. Downey, "Ephraemius, Patriarch of Antioch", *Church History*, vii (1938), pp. 364-70.

<sup>140</sup> For example, Procopius, *Wars*, ii. 11. 14 ff.; see *ibid.*, i. 7. 5-11; ii. 13. 13; 20. 1; 30. 3. Procopius actually gives a rather large amount of space to priests and holy men in the Persian war, despite his supposed "rationalism", so that I prefer to believe that when he fails to mention the image of Edessa in 544 (*ibid.*, i. 26-7) it is because he does not know of it, not because he was trying to disinfest his narrative of such manifestations (implied by Runciman, "Some Remarks on the Image of Edessa", p. 244).

<sup>141</sup> Whereas in Peter Brown's analysis the pull of icons tends to be seen as operating outside, or against, the institutional church: Brown, "A Dark-Age Crisis", pp. 8, 22. Thus icons take over the "marginal" functions of holy men: *ibid.*, pp. 12, 14-15.

<sup>142</sup> Kitzinger, *Byzantine Art in the Making*, pp. 103 ff. Similarly Peter Brown refers to "anxious dependence on an invisible Virgin": Brown, "A Dark-Age Crisis", p. 29. But she was very much visible, in her omnipresent icons, and the mood was (at this point) one of confidence.



late sixth-century art itself has another side, and is the subject of as much dispute among scholars as is urbanism in the same period.<sup>143</sup> Archaeologists are now learning to resist the hasty assumption that when the early Byzantines used stones — even inscribed stones — from classical buildings in their own churches and fortifications it must indicate "decline".<sup>144</sup> The picture is varied and complex. In agrarian and military history the most extreme dislocation of Byzantine society occurred in the seventh rather than the sixth century, and recent administrative studies tend to put emphasis on continuity up to the seventh century as well as rupture.<sup>145</sup> Late sixth-century authors complain about neglect, but do not suggest that they felt the system as a whole was breaking down; indeed they expect their emperors to continue the militaristic pattern set by Justinian,<sup>146</sup> and both emperors and writers still hold to the fundamentally optimistic view that earthly success would be the guaranteed reward of right ideology in a God-protected empire.<sup>147</sup> Yet recent experience seemed to suggest that something was missing. This consciousness called forth not so much a last-ditch attempt to ward off chaos as a mental readjustment. This took several different forms and was a way of coping with the general sense of dissatisfaction in the face of economic problems and military neglect at the end of Justinian's reign<sup>148</sup> while yet holding on to the same basic principles of imperial power as had motivated Justinian. Clearly, if success was not forthcoming, it was because God was not pleased; the logical course, therefore, was for everyone, but especially the emperor, as the head of the earthly

<sup>143</sup> Not all art historians have wanted to find in contemporary works (of which few are securely dated) signs of "decline" or, alternatively, increased spirituality. Kitzinger himself has provided a classic survey indicating the variety and the problems of the art of this period: E. Kitzinger, "Byzantine Art in the Period between Justinian and Iconoclasm", in *Berichte zum XI Internationalen Byzantinisten-Kongress* (Munich, 1958). See also note 54 above, and Cameron, "The Artistic Patronage of Justin II".

<sup>144</sup> Above all, the case of the north African towns after the Byzantine reconquest in 534 shows that there is a clear change of emphasis and use. For a survey and further bibliography, see N. Duval, "Études sur l'architecture chrétienne nord-africaine", *Mélanges École française de Rome*, lxxxiv, *Antiquité* (1972), pp. 1071-2.

<sup>145</sup> Haldon, "Some Remarks on the Background to the Iconoclastic Controversy"; W. E. Kaegi, Jr., "Notes on Hagiographic Sources for Institutional Changes and Continuities in the Early Seventh Century", *Byzantina*, vii (1975), pp. 59 ff. For Cappadocia, N. Thierry makes a strong case for continuity into the seventh century: N. Thierry, "Un problème de continuité ou de rupture: la Cappadoce entre Rome, Byzance et les Arabes", *Comptes rendus de l'Académie des Inscriptions* (1977), pp. 98-144. We must remember the wide variety of urban experience coexisting at this time: see Patlagean, *Pauvreté économique et pauvreté sociale*, p. 233.

<sup>146</sup> See Cameron, *Agathias*, pp. 124 ff.; Averil Cameron, "Early Byzantine *Kaiserkritik*: Two Case Histories", *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies*, iii (1977), pp. 1-17.

<sup>147</sup> Haldon, *op. cit.*, p. 165.

<sup>148</sup> Theophanes, *Chronographia*, i, pp. 234 ff.

hierarchy, to strive to make his connection with God still closer and still more visible.

The story of Constantinople in the late sixth century is not then so much at odds with that of late sixth-century cities generally as might appear. Indeed, in a sense, both are continuations of a pattern set by Justinian. For the massive church-building programme set in motion by him and continued in some places by his successors meant that from now on the great church of each community would be, even more than before, *un théâtre spirituel*, a real focus for the town which could even rival the hippodrome for the loyalties of the population, and which would provide the setting for urban ritual.<sup>149</sup>

#### CONCLUSION

But we began with the emperors in Constantinople and their assumption of a more consistent and more overtly religious role. The process was under way in the reign of Justin II, who not surprisingly also initiated a determined (though unsuccessful) effort to crush religious dissent in the shape of Monophysitism.<sup>150</sup> At this stage it still seemed possible to crush the dangerously centrifugal pull which Monophysitism certainly exerted. If we look more closely at the imperial symbols of the late sixth and early seventh centuries it will be clear at once that they are, above all, symbols of authority. If Justinian had tried and hoped, Heraclius succeeded in placing the emperor at the very heart of the religious as well as the political loyalties of his subjects. As the Persian Chosroes II in 626 appeared as the wicked Holophernes, so the Byzantine Heraclius became David.<sup>151</sup> In contemporary minds the church during the siege was Deborah vanquishing Sisara, the battle in the waters of the Golden Horn the drowning of the Egyptians in the Red Sea, the patriarch another Moses. A mode of thought already standard in religious texts,<sup>152</sup> and soon as

<sup>149</sup> See Patlagean, *op. cit.*, pp. 207 ff. For hippodromes in the sixth century, see J. H. Humphrey, "Prolegomena to the Study of the Hippodrome at Caesarea Maritima", *Bull. Amer. Schools of Oriental Research*, ccxiii (1974), pp. 31 ff.

<sup>150</sup> See Cameron, "The Early Religious Policies of Justin II", pp. 51 ff. Justinian more than any other emperor had used ecclesiastical policy to affirm imperial authority. See, for instance, W. H. C. Frend, "Old and New Rome in the Age of Justinian", in D. Baker (ed.), *The Relations between East and West in the Middle Ages* (Edinburgh, 1973), pp. 11-28.

<sup>151</sup> Anon. Mai, pp. 424, 434-5, esp. p. 435 (the words of Isaiah foretold the events of 626 by *skia kai tupos* — "foreshadowing and type"). For type and antitype in early Byzantine art, see F. Van der Meer, *Early Christian Art* (London, 1967); Mathew, *Byzantine Aesthetics*, pp. 99, 170 ff. It was hardly possible to go on excluding this typology from the formal literary genres, yet until recently writers in these fields had largely succeeded in doing so.

<sup>152</sup> To take only two of countless examples, in the *Life* of the patriarch Eutychius (died 582), the four patriarchs are the four rivers of Paradise, and Eutychius mounting his pulpit is Moses going up to Mount Sinai: Eustratius, *Vita Eutychii* (P. G., lxxxvi pt. 2, Rome, 1865, cols. 2309, 2364).

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much of a stereotype as a Virgilian echo in late Latin poetry, was perhaps for the first time fully applied to a historical event involving the entire population of the city, in such a way that the emperor himself was drawn into the "thought-world" of his people.

Only now, we may suspect, was the notion of the emperor's place in the earthly and divine hierarchies, current since the early sixth century,<sup>153</sup> fully realized. The growing imperial ceremonial left no room for the unexpected. The "raising" of the emperor, whether on a shield or on a platform or in the royal box of the Hippodrome, symbolized his superior place on the ladder of authority, just as it recalled the rising of Christ. The emperor was, after all, the head of the body politic and the intermediary between God and his people on earth. In this "forest of symbols"<sup>154</sup> the crystallization of the inauguration ritual was an essential step. And the Virgin herself was a symbol of authority, the "ladder" or "bridge" between human and divine.<sup>155</sup> Apse mosaics of the Virgin and Child had become popular during the sixth century precisely because of her function as the means by which God took flesh, that is, as a symbol of the orthodox (and imperially sponsored) doctrine of the Incarnation. If the emperors could associate themselves with her, they too would position themselves between the divine and the human hierarchies. And in the eastern empire in the later sixth century she is not only mother and warrior but also queen, the guise in which she could bestow power and authority on her special city and its rulers.<sup>156</sup> The advantage of so powerful and complex a symbol could not be resisted; after all, Constantinople had long

<sup>153</sup> See the *Ekthesis* of Agapetus (see note 17 above). Though fundamental to the Christian empire since Eusebius, these ideas of hierarchy received a new emphasis with the pervasive influence of the works of ps. Dionysius the Areopagite (circa 500). For this and for the notion of Justinian's empire as representing a "descending" (theocratic) order of government, see W. Ullmann, *Principles of Government and Politics in the Middle Ages*, 2nd edn. (London, 1966), pp. 117 ff. The prevailing imagery of government, reinforced by religion, would tend to accentuate the idea of hierarchy.

<sup>154</sup> Victor Turner, *The Forest of Symbols* (Ithaca and London, 1967).

<sup>155</sup> See Cameron, "The Cult of the Theotokos", pp. 103 ff. The Akathistos hymn, newly prominent from 626 onwards, is a veritable repository of Marian typology. For the symbolic value of the Virgin, see also Turner and Turner, *Image and Pilgrimage in Christian Culture*, pp. 149-61.

<sup>156</sup> Like the Virgin of Częstochowa, the national patron of Poland, as the *regina Poloniae*: while she can be seen as the Mother of Sorrows (a concept not found in the early Byzantine period) she is also regarded as the source of national victory. In the successful defence of Częstochowa against the Swedes in 1655 she too was seen by the besiegers, standing on the walls directing the siege engines and supplying the defenders with arms: A. Kordecki, *Nova gigantomachia, contra sacram imaginem deiparae Virginis a Sancto Luca depictam . . . per Suecos et alios haereticos excitata* (Cracow, 1655), p. 104. For the general history of the icon, recently highlighted by the scenes of devotion provoked by the visit of Pope John Paul II to Poland, see M. Zalecki, *Theology of a Marian Shrine: Our Lady of Częstochowa* (Marian Library Studies, new ser., viii, Dayton, Ohio, 1976). The Virgin of Guadalupe could be a warrior too: Turner and Turner, *op. cit.*, p. 146.

possessed the Virgin's robe, bearing the traces of her very milk.<sup>157</sup> How natural that this precious relic should now be revealed as a source of miracles.

In one sense this effort at realignment was a failure. It could not in itself help against the military and political problems dramatically posed by the seventh-century invasions. Constantinople found a new sense of urban unity during the siege of 626, but the Emperor Heraclius, who had triumphantly restored the True Cross to Jerusalem in 630, gave his support, aided by the patriarch Sergius, to Monothelitism, a misguided attempt at resolving the problems of heresy and division in the eastern church which in the event caused open cleavage for more than a generation.<sup>158</sup> Soon Jerusalem, the site of Heraclius's triumph, fell to the Arabs, and the emperor died a disappointed man. Hardly anything is known of culture or education in the mid-seventh century. Yet somehow the emperors survived and the central government clung on. There was certainly no time now for the luxury of conscious classicism or nostalgia for the Roman past. But I would suggest that instead of supposing that a curtain fell with the seventh-century invasions, we recognize that a revision of imperial ideology and an adaptation of the educated classes to contemporary needs was already taking place from the late sixth century, and that this process actually gave to the still-existent but now for us highly obscure élite of Byzantium the strength and will to hang on until better days opened their options once again.

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<sup>157</sup> Loparev, pp. 605-6. From 626 onwards, more and more stress was laid on the physical intimacy of these relics; see the work of the patriarch Germanus of Constantinople (eighth century).

<sup>158</sup> The basic (but not very satisfactory) guide for Heraclius is A. S. Mango, *Byzantium in the Seventh Century*, 4 vols. (Amsterdam, 1968-73), i-ii; see also A. Pernice, *L'imperatore Eraclio* (Florence, 1905). For Monothelitism, see Van Dieten, *Geschichte der Patriarchen*; C. von Schönborn, *Sophrone de Jérusalem* (Paris, 1972).



## ADDENDA

- III, 324 For the date of Macrobius see more recently Alan Cameron, *JRS* 56 (1966), 25-38; J. Flamant, *Macrobie et le néoplatonisme latin à la fin du IV<sup>e</sup> siècle* (Leiden, 1977); S. Döpp, *Hermes* 106 (1978), 619-32.
- V, n. 79 In the past year there has been lively activity among the scientists concerned with the Shroud, and much publicity, especially focussed on Walter McCrone's claim to have detected iron oxide on it. The carbon-14 test has not, however, been done. An excellent account of the scientific information so far released can now be found in the generally sceptical book of H. David Sox, *The Image on the Shroud* (London, 1981). For the alleged traces of coins over the eyes see Francis L. Filas, S.J., *The Dating of the Shroud of Turin from Coins of Pontius Pilate* (Youngtown, Arizona, 1980).
- XIV, 223 Professor Thomas Gelzer makes the suggestion that the mysterious 'Andreas orator' might be a garbled version of 'S. Andreae oratorio' (cf. p. 226), and that perhaps Rusticana sent it to Gregory with a gift for the monastery.
- n.3 While MS. A does contain the Epigrams of Prosper and some short poems, it is incorrectly implied here that they appear in CSEL 10.

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